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LECTURES

ON

THE PHILOSOPHY

OF

THE HUMAN MIND.

BY THE LATE

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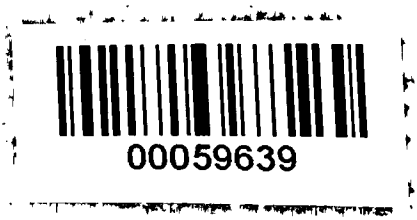

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LECTURES

ON THE

PHILOSOPHY OF THE HUMAN MIND.

LECTURE LI.

ON THE FEELINGS BELONGING TO THE ORDER OF SUCCESSION, CONCLUDED.—REDUCTION OF CERTAIN SUPPOSED FACULTIES TO RELATIVE SUGGESTION—I. JUDGMENT—II. REASON—III. ABSTRACTION.

GENTLEMEN, in my last Lecture, I began the remarks which I had to offer on the *relations of succession*,—that order of relations which remained to be examined after our examination of *relations of coexistence*.

Objects, or events, or feelings, when we consider them in the relation which they bear to each other as successive, may be regarded as casually *prior* or *posterior*, when they occur as parts of different trains, or as invariably *antecedent* and *consequent*, when they occur as parts of a single train in the order of causes and effects.

On the relation of objects, as casually successive, I felt it unnecessary to dwell at any length. It has already, indeed, been in some measure discussed, when I treated of the laws of those *simple* suggestions, or associate trains of images, which rise according to this relation of proximity in time. As there is nothing *permanent* in the relation, it scarcely can be counted an object of science. Its *only advantage*,—but this a very *great advantage*,—is, that which it affords as an *assistance to our memory*, which is thus enabled to preserve much knowledge that might otherwise be lost; since we are able, by the accidental *bearings* of other events in time, to form a sort of chronology of many of those *little* events of life, that are *great* in relation to our wishes and affections, and that probably would have been forgotten, but for those *fixed points*, in the *track of our life*, which recal to us what lay between. By the aid of these, we are able to journey again over hours, and days, and months of happiness, in years the most remote, connecting together, in one delightful series, events which would have been of little moment if remembered singly, but which, when combined, are almost representative of the group of pleasures and friendships that existed once, but may perhaps exist to us no more; as in the similar order of contiguity in place, it would be productive but of slight gratification, if we were to think only of some separate tree, or rock, or stream, or meadow, of the landscape of our infancy. It is when the whole scene rises before us in combination,—when the tree, under which we hollowed out our seat, waves over the rock,

from which we have leapt with a sort of fearful delight to the opposite overhanging cliff, and the rivulet foams in the narrow channel between, spreading out, afterwards, its waters in the sunny expanse in which we bathed, and separating the field of our sports from the churchyard, at which we have cast, in the twilight, many a trembling glance; when all which nature blended before us, in the perceptions of our earliest years, thus coexists in our conception, it is then that we truly recognize the scene, not as an object of memory only, but as if present to our very eyes and heart. Such is the effect of the representation of objects in the order in which they coexisted in place; and it is not wonderful, that the feeling of the relation of their order in time, should have a similar influence on our emotions, by giving unity of connexion; and thus, as it were, additional and more interesting reality to all which we remember. The priority and subsequence of the events remembered, according to this slight accidental relation, may have arisen, indeed, from circumstances the most unimportant in themselves; but it is enough to our feelings, that they arose thus successively, constituting a part of the very history of our life, and forming some of the many ties which connect us with those of whom the very remembrance is happiness. What was truly casual in its origin, almost ceases to appear to us casual, by the permanent connexions which it afterwards presents to our memory. Other successions of events may be imagined, which would have been more interesting to others, and in which it would have been easier to trace some prin-

ciple of original connexion. But, though more regular, and more interesting to others, they would not have been the events of our youth; as a scene might perhaps readily be imagined, far more lovely to other eyes than the landscape of our early home, but in which *our* eyes, even in admiring its loveliness, would look in vain for a charm, which, if it be not beauty itself, is at least something still more tenderly delightful.

The relation even of *casual* succession, then, by the connexion and grouping of events to which it gives rise, and the consequent aid and interest which it yields to our remembrance, affords no slight accession of enjoyment and permanent utility. The relations of *invariable antecedents and consequents*, however, which are felt by us to be *essentially different*, from mere casual proximity, and to be all that is truly involved in our notion, of *power* or *causation*, are of much greater importance to that intellectual, and moral, and physical life, which may almost be said to depend on them. Even if they gave us nothing more than our knowledge of the *uniform connexions of past events*, as objects of mere speculative science, at once constituting and explaining the phenomena that excited our astonishment, and awoke that early curiosity which they have continued to busy ever since, they would furnish, by the view which they open of the powers of nature, and of all the gracious purposes to which those powers have been subservient, one of the sublimest delights of which our spiritual being is capable.

This gratification they would yield to us, even if we were to regard them only *in the past*, as objects of a science purely *speculative*. But, when we consider the relations of events, in their aptitudes to precede and follow, as equally diffused, over the time that is to come, as presenting to us, everywhere, in the past or present sequences observed by us, the source of some *future good* or *future evil*,—of *good* which we can *obtain*, and of *evil* which we can *avoid*, merely by knowing the order in which these past sequences have occurred,—the knowledge of these *invariable* relations of succession becomes to us *inestimable*,—not as a medium only of intellectual luxury, but as the medium of all the arts of life, and even of the continuance of our very physical existence, which is preserved only by an unceasing adaptation of our *actions* to the *fitnesses* or tendencies of *external things*.

All practical *science* is the knowledge of these aptitudes of things in their various circumstances of combination, as every *art* is the employment of them, in conformity with this knowledge, with a view to those future changes which they tend to produce in all the different circumstances in which objects can be placed. To know how to add any enjoyment to life, or how to lessen any of its evils, is nothing more, in any case, than to know the relation which objects bear to each other, as antecedent and consequent, some form of that *particular relation* which we are considering. In the conclusion of my last Lecture, I treated of it, in regard to the *physical sciences and arts*,—those intellectual ener-

gies, which have given to the *savage man*, and consequently to *all mankind*,—since, in every state of society, refined or rude, in the palace, as much as in the hut, or in the cave, man must be *born* a *savage*, —another life, a life almost as different from that with which he roams in the woods, as if he had been suddenly transported, from the barren waste of earth, to those Elysian groves of which poetry speaks, and that godlike company of bards, and heroes, and sages, with which they have peopled the delightful scene.

Of the importance of the feeling of this relation to the *physical sciences*, which is abundantly evident of itself, it would be vain to attempt to give any fuller illustration. But it must be remembered, that the *mind* is a subject of *this relation*, as much as the body,—that there are aptitudes of producing *certain feelings*, as much as of producing *certain material changes*,—and that the power which discerns or feels the *mere aptitude*, in the one case, is not essentially distinct from the power which discerns or feels, the *mere aptitude*, in the other case. The particular relations that are felt, are, indeed, different, as the relative objects are different, but not that general susceptibility of the mind, by which it is capable of feeling the relation of fitness or unfitness. To foreknow, in mechanics, what combination of wheels and pullies will be able to elevate a certain weight, is to feel one sort of fitness, or relation of antecedence. To foreknow, in chemistry, what more powerful attraction will overcome an affinity that is weaker, and *precipitate* a substance, which we wish to obtain, from the liquid that holds

it in solution, is to feel another sort of fitness. The particular feelings of relation, in these cases, imply *acquirements* that are *very different;* but no one, on account of this mere difference of the objects of which the relation of antecedence and consequence is felt, thinks of *classing* the *chemical foresight* as indicative of an *intellectual power essentially different* from that, which, in the applications of mechanic foresight, feels the relation of the weights and pullies in a machine, and foresees, by a knowledge of this relation, the equilibrium or preponderance which is to result. The experience which gives the foresight, is, indeed, different, but the power which reasons from that different experience is the same. The susceptibility of the same feeling of the relation of productive aptitude, however, has, in certain *mental* cases, been supposed to be different, merely because its objects are different; and discriminations of mere fitness or unfitness, which are truly referable to the same simple capacity of *relative suggestion,* that foresees the future by knowing the present, have been formed into *a class apart,* as if not the *discriminations only* were different, but the power itself which has formed them.

When we feel any of the *mechanical* or *chemical* relations of succession, and predict, accordingly, events which are to take place, we are commonly said to do this by the power of *reasoning.* Even in many of the *mental* phenomena, when we venture, in like manner, to *predict* the *future,* from our knowledge of the relation of *feelings* to *each other,* as uniformly successive, we are said to make the pre-

diction by the power of *reasoning*. When a statesman, for example, meditates on the probable effects of a *particular law* which is about to be enacted, and, from his knowledge of the interests, and passions, and prejudices,—the *wisdom* and the very *ignorance* of *man*,—calculates the relative amount of *good* and *evil*, which it may possibly produce to those frail, half-stubborn, half-yielding multitudes, whom he must often benefit *against their will*, and save from the long *evil*, of which they see only the momentary good, there is no one who hesitates in ascribing this *political foresight* to the sagacity of his *power of reasoning*, or of drawing accurate conclusions, as to future sequences of events, from his observations of the past. In the calculation of the *motives* which may operate in the *general mind*, however, nothing more is implied than a knowledge of the *relation* of *certain feelings* to *other feelings*, *reciprocally antecedent and consequent*. But, if the *states of mind*, the relation of which, as successive to other states of mind, is felt by us, be of a different order,—if, instead of a legislator, feeling accurately the relation of certain feelings to certain attendant emotions in the mind of the people, we imagine a *critic* feeling, with equal precision, the relation of certain perceptions of form, or colour, or sound, to certain emotions of admiration or disgust that are to arise in the mind of him who has those perceptions, though all which is felt, in both cases, is a certain relation of customary antecedence, we are instantly said to speak of a *different power of*

the mind. The power which we consider, is said to be the power of *Taste.*

This *distinction,* of the power of taste,—in appreciating the excellence of the fine arts, and the beauties of nature, from that *general capacity* of feeling the *aptitudes* of certain *feelings* to be *followed by certain other feelings,* of which it is only a modification, has arisen, there can be very little doubt, from the complexity of the term *taste,* in our common phraseology—as involving *two classes* of *feelings,* that admit of being separated in our thought, by a very easy analysis,—*emotions,* and *judgments* of the objects that are fit or unfit to excite those emotions. Certain objects are not merely *perceived* by us, as *forms,* or *colours,* or *sounds;* the perception of these *forms,* and *colours,* and *sounds,* is followed by an *emotion* which is of various nature, according to the nature of the object. What we call *beauty,* is, in *our mind,* an *emotion,*—as, in external things, it is the *aptitude* to produce this emotion. To *feel this emotion* is one state of mind;—to *know* the relation which other previous feelings bear to it—what *forms,* or *sounds,* or *colours,* separately or together, have a fitness of producing the emotion, is *another* state of mind, as distinct from *it,* as the *political sagacity* of the statesman, in anticipating the *violence* of *popular feeling,* on any particular occasion, is *distinct* from those *passions* and *prejudices* of the *vulgar,* which he foresees, as the certain effects of certain necessary measures, and which he strives accordingly, by some of the expedients of his mighty art, to disarm or to dissipate. If the judgments of *taste* had been

as *clearly* distinguished from the *emotions* which it *measures* in their relation to the objects that are likely or unlikely to produce them, as the *wisdom* of the *politician*, from the *passions* which that wisdom contemplates, in their relation to the circumstance which may tend to inflame them, we should as little have thought of ranking it as a *peculiar power*, as we think, at present, of inventing new names of faculties corresponding with all the variety of events corporeal or mental, in which we are capable of inferring the future from the past, by our knowledge of the reciprocal tendencies of objects,—of ranking, for example, as a *peculiar intellectual power*, distinct from the general power of reason, the *skill* with which the legislator adapts his regulations to the varying circumstances of society,—or, as in the physics of matter, we think of ascribing to *different intellectual powers*, the *reasonings* of the *chemist* and of the *mechanician*. Chemistry, mechanics, politics, *taste*,—that is to say, the *critical* part of taste,—of course imply previous observation of the successions of those different phenomena, material and mental, which are the subject of these respective sciences,—an experience of the past that is different in each particular case; but, when the *successions* of the different phenomena *have been* observed, it is the same faculty, which, in all these sciences alike, predicting the future from the past, feels the *relation* of antecedence of each phenomenon to its successive phenomena, distinguishing the particular antecedents that are more or less likely to be followed by particular consequents. To call taste a *science*, like

chemistry, or *mechanics*, or even *politics*, may seem at first a bold, and perhaps even an unwarrantable use of the term; but I have no hesitation in calling it *a science*, because it is truly a science, as much as any other knowledge of the *successions* of *phenomena* to which we give that name,—the science of certain effects which may be anticipated as the consequents of certain antecedents. It is a science, indeed, which is not capable of the universality of some other sciences, because it is a science of *emotions*, that must, in some measure, at least, have been *felt* by him who judges of the fitness of certain objects to produce these emotions; and all have not this sensibility. But the sensibility relates to the existence of the *emotions* only, which, as I have already stated, are *mental phenomena* of a *different class*, from the subsequent *judgments*, which *estimate* the *fitness* of objects, to excite the emotions. The *feeling of these emotions* is unquestionably *not a science*, more than the feelings of *security* and *patriotism*, or *discontent* and *selfish ambition*, which the statesman must have in view, are sciences. But the *knowledge* of *those objects* which will *excite* the most general emotions of beauty and admiration, is *a science*, as the political knowledge of the *means* that will have most general influence in *producing* the emotions of civil happiness, and contentment, or the fury of popular indignation, is a science. Both are nothing more than the experience of the feelings which follow certain other feelings, and the consequent feeling of the relation of their future aptitudes. We may deny the name of a science to *both*, but, if we allow it to the

one, I cannot see any reason which should lead us to deny it to the other.

Of the *emotions*,—of the aptitudes of producing which *taste* is the *science*,—it is not at present my intention to speak. As *emotions*, they come under our consideration afterwards; and even the few remarks, which I may have to offer on *taste itself*, as the knowledge of the fitness of certain objects to excite the emotion of beauty, and other kindred emotions, I shall defer, till I have treated of the emotions, which are its subjects. My only object at present, is to point out to you, the proper *systematic place*, in our arrangement, of those mere feelings of the *aptitudes* of certain *objects* for *exciting* certain *emotions*,—which constitute the judgments distinguished by the name of *taste*. It is peculiarly important for me to point this out to you at present; since, but for the analysis, which I have made of the *emotion* itself, as one state of mind, and the knowledge of what is fitted to excite it, as a very different state of mind, you might conceive, that my classification of our intellectual phenomena, as referable to the two mental susceptibilities, under which I have arranged them, was defective, from the omission of *one* very important faculty. You now, I trust, see my reason, for dividing what is commonly denominated *taste*, into its two distinct elements,—*one* of which is as much an *emotion*, as any of our other emotions,—the *other*,—which is only the knowledge of the particular forms, colours, sounds, or conceptions, that are most likely to be followed by this emotion,—is as much a *feeling of the relation of fit-*

ness, as any of the other suggestions of fitness, on which every science, that has regard to the mere successions of phenomena, as reciprocally antecedent and consequent, is founded.

I am aware, that many authors have concurred, in not regarding *taste* as a simple faculty of the mind; but the taste, of which they speak, is chiefly the very *emotion* of pleasure, to the production of which they conceive various circumstances to be essential. The two great elements, as it appears to me, which it is of *most* importance to distinguish, are the *emotion itself*, in *whatever way it may arise*, and *however complex it may be*, and the *feeling* of the *relation* of certain *forms, sounds, colours, conceptions*, or various *combinations of these*, to this emotion as their effect,—the feeling of the relation of the one, as successive in time to the other, and of the corresponding *aptitude* of that other for producing *it*. Whatever additional analyses may be formed by philosophers of the emotion itself, *this* analysis, at least, seems to me obvious and indisputable. I proceed upon it, therefore, with confidence, and flatter myself, that you will have no difficulty, in forming in your own mind the same analysis,—referring the *one* element to our susceptibility of the *relative suggestions of fitness*, that are necessarily as various, as the phenomena which precede and follow them,—the other *primary element* to our *susceptibility of emotion*.

In concluding my view of the phenomena of Simple Suggestion, or, as it is more commonly termed,

Association, I considered those various modifications of it, which philosophers, from a defective analysis of the phenomena, had converted into separate intellectual powers. In concluding my view of the *phenomena of Relative Suggestion*, it may be necessary, in like manner, to take such a view, though the field, over which we have to move, is, in this case, a more *narrow* one.

The tendency of the mind, which I have distinguished by the name of *relative suggestion*, is that by which, on perceiving or conceiving objects together, we are instantly impressed with certain feelings of their mutual relation. These suggested feelings are feelings of a particular kind, and require, therefore, to be classed separately from the perceptions or conceptions, which suggest them, but do not involve them.

Our relative suggestions, then, as you have seen, are those feelings of relation, which arise from the perception or conception of *two* or more *objects*, or *two* or more *affections of our mind*,—feelings which are of considerable variety, and which I classed under two heads, as the *relations* of *coexistence*, and the *relations* of *succession*. It is easy for us, in every case, to separate this feeling of relation from the *perceptions* or *conceptions* themselves. We perceive or conceive objects;—we feel them to be variously related;—and the feeling of the relation itself is not *more* mysterious, than the perception or *simple suggestion*, which may have given rise to it.

The law of mind, by which, on considering *four* and *eight*, I feel a certain relation of proportion,—the same precise relation, which I feel, on considering together five and ten, fifty and a hundred,—is as *clear and intelligible a law of our mental constitution*, as that by which I am able to form the separate notion, either of four or eight, five or ten, fifty or a hundred.

With this susceptibility of relative suggestion, the faculty of judgment, as that term is commonly employed, may be considered as nearly synonimous; and I have accordingly often used it as synonimous, in treating of the different relations that have come under our review.

But those who ascribe judgment to man, ascribe to him also another faculty, which they distinguish by the name of *reason*,—though reasoning itself is found, when analysed, to be nothing more than a *series of judgments*. The whole is thus represented as something different from all the parts which compose it. Whether we reason syllogistically with the schoolmen, or according to those simpler processes of thought, which nature teaches, our reasoning is *divisible* into a number of consecutive judgments, or feelings of relation; and if we take away these *consecutive judgments*, we have nothing behind, which can be called a *ratiocination*. In a simple proposition, we take *one* step, or feel one relation,—in an enthymeme, we take *two* steps, or feel two relations,—in a syllogism, we take *three* steps, or feel three relations; but we never think, when we speak of

the *motion* of our *limbs*, that the power of taking *three* steps differs essentially from the power of taking *one*; and that we must, therefore, invent new names of bodily faculties for every slight variety, or even every simple repetition of movement. If this amplification of faculties would be absurd in treating of the mere motion of our limbs, it is surely not more philosophic, in the case of the intellectual exercise. Whatever is affirmed, in any stage of our reasoning, is a relation of some sort,—of which, as felt by us, the proposition that affirms the relation is only a verbal statement,—is a series of such judgments, or feelings of relation, and nothing distinct from them, though the mutual relations of the series, which together form the reasoning, have led us falsely to suppose, as I have said, that *the whole* is something more than *all the parts* which constitute the whole.

The circumstance, which led to the distinction of *reason* from *judgment*, was, perhaps, however, not the mere *length* and mutual connexion of the series, so much as that mistake with respect to the power falsely ascribed to the mind, of *finding out*, by some voluntary process, those intervening propositions, which serve as the medium of proof. The error on which this opinion is founded, I have already sufficiently exposed; and, therefore, need not repeat, at any length, the confutation of it.

We cannot *invent*, as I shewed you, a single medium of proof; but the proofs *arise* to us, independently of our will, in the same manner, as the *pri-*

mary subject of the proposition, which we analyse in our reasoning, itself arose. The *desire* of tracing all the relations of an object, when we meditate, may coexist with the successive *feelings of relations* as they arise,—and it is this complex state of mind, in which intention or desire continues to coexist, with these successive feelings, to which we commonly give the name of *reasoning*. But it surely is not difficult to analyse this complex state, and to discover in it, as its only elements, the *desire* itself, with the conceptions which it involves, or which it suggests, and the separate *relations* of these conceptions, which rise precisely as they arose, and are felt precisely as they were felt before, on other occasions, when no such desire existed, and when the relative objects *chanced* to present themselves together to our perceptions, or in our loosest and most irregular trains of thought. The *permanence* of the *desire*, indeed, keeps the *object* to which it relates more permanently before us, and allows, therefore, a greater variety of relative suggestions belonging to it to arise; but it does not affect the principle itself, which developes these relations. Each arises, as before, unwilled. We cannot will the feeling of a relation, for this would be to have already felt the relation which we willed; as to will a particular conception in a train of thought, would be to have already that particular conception. Yet, while this power of *willing conceptions and relations* was falsely ascribed to the mind, it was a very natural consequence of this mistake, that the *reasoning*, which

involved the supposed *invention*, should be regarded as essentially different from the judgments, or simple feelings of *relation*, that involved no such exercise of voluntary power.

Reasoning then, in its juster sense, as felt by us *internally*, is nothing more than a *series of relative suggestions*, of which the *separate subjects* are felt by us to be *mutually related*—as expressed in language, it is merely a *series of propositions*, each of which is only a *verbal statement* of some relation internally felt by us. There is nothing, therefore, involved in the ratiocination independently of the accompanying desire, but a series of feelings of relation, to the susceptibility of which feelings, accordingly, the faculty called reason, and the faculty called judgment, may equally be reduced. If we take away at each step the mere feeling of relation, the *judgment* is *nothing*, and if we take away the separate feelings termed judgments, nothing remains to be denominated *reasoning*.

Another faculty, with which the mind has been enriched, by those systematic writers, who have examined its phenomena, and ranked them under *different powers*, is the faculty of *abstraction*,—a faculty by which we are supposed to be capable of *separating* in our thought certain parts of our complex notions, and of considering them thus abstracted from the rest.

This *supposed* faculty, however, is not merely *unreal*, as ascribed to the mind, but, I may add, even that such a faculty is *impossible*, since every exertion of it would *imply a contradiction*.

In abstraction, the mind is supposed to single out a particular part of some one of its complex notions, for particular consideration. But what is the state of the mind immediately preceding this *intentional separation*—its state at the moment in which the supposed faculty is conceived to be called into exercise? Does it not involve necessarily the very *abstraction* which it is supposed to produce? and must we not, therefore, in admitting such a power of *voluntary separation*, admit an *infinite series* of preceding abstractions, to account for a *single act of abstraction?* If we *know* what we single out, we have already performed all the separation which is necessary; if we do *not* know what we are singling out, and do not even know that we are singling out anything, the separate part of the complex whole may, indeed, rise to our conception; but it cannot arise by the operation of any voluntary faculty. That *such conceptions do indeed arise*, as states of the mind, there can be no question. In every sentence which we read—in every affirmation which we make—in almost every portion of our silent train of thoughts, some *decomposition* of *more complex perceptions or notions* has taken place. The exact recurrence of any complex whole, at any two moments, is perhaps what never takes place. After we look at a scene before us, so long as to have made every part of it familiar, if we close our eyes to think of it, in the very moment of bringing our eyelids together, some change of this kind has taken place. The complex whole, which we saw the very instant before, when conceived by us in this instant succession,

is no longer, *in every circumstance*, the *same complex whole*. *Some* part, or rather *many parts*, are *lost altogether*. A still greater number of parts are variously diversified,—and though we should still call the *scene* the same, it would appear to us a very different scene, if our conception could be embodied and presented to our eye, together with the real landscape of which it seems to us the copy. If this change takes place *in a single instant*, at longer intervals it cannot fail to be much more considerable, though the *very interval*, which gives occasion to the greater diversity, prevents the diversity itself from being equally felt by us.

Abstraction then—as far as *abstraction* consists in the *rise* of conceptions in the mind, which are *parts* of former mental affections, *more complex than these*, *does* unquestionably occur; and, since it occurs, it must occur according to laws which are truly laws of the mind, and must indicate some mental power, or powers, in consequence of which the conceptions termed abstractions arise. Is it necessary, however, to have recourse to any *peculiar* faculty, or are they not rather modifications of those susceptibilities of the mind, which have been already considered by us?

In treating of those states of the mind, which constitute our general notions, I have already, in a great measure, *anticipated* the remarks, which it might otherwise be necessary to offer, in explanation of *abstraction*. The relative suggestions of resemblance are, in truth, or at least involve as parts of the suggestion,—those *very feelings*, for the pro-

duction of which this *peculiar* faculty is assigned. We perceive two objects,—a rock, for example, and a tree: We press against them—they both produce in us that sensation, which constitutes our *feeling of resistance.* We give the name of hardness to this *common property* of the external objects; and our mere *feeling of resemblance,* when referred to the resembling objects, is thus converted into an abstraction. If we are capable of *feeling the resemblance,* the abstraction is surely already formed, and needs, therefore, no other power to produce it.

To that principle of *relative suggestion,* by which we feel the resemblance of objects in certain respects, to the exclusion, consequently, of all the other circumstances, in which they have no resemblance, by far the greater number of our abstractions, and those which most commonly go under that name, may, in this manner, be traced; since, in consequence of this principle of our mind, we are *almost incessantly* feeling some relation of similarity in objects, and omitting, in consequence, in this feeling of resemblance, the *parts or circumstances of the complex whole,* in which *no similarity is felt.* What is thus termed abstraction, is the very notion of partial similarity. It would be as impossible to regard objects as similar in certain respects, without having the conceptions termed abstract, as to *see, without vision,* or to *hope without desire.* The capacity of the feeling of resemblance, then, is the great source of the conceptions termed abstract. Many of them, however, may be referred, not to that susceptibility of the mind, by which our *relative suggestions* arise,

but to that other susceptibility of suggestions of another kind, which we previously considered. In those common instances of *simple suggestion*, which philosophers have ascribed to a principle of association, they never have thought it necessary to prove, nor have they even contended, that the *feelings*, which arise in consequence of this mere association, *must* be *exact transcripts of the former feelings in every respect*, however complex these former feelings may have been; that, when we have seen a *groupe* of objects together, no *part* of this groupe can be recalled, *without* the *rest*—no rock, or streamlet, of a particular valley, for example, without *every tree*, and *every branch of every tree*, that were seen by us, waving over the little current, and every minute angle of the rock, as if measured with geometrical precision. Suggestions of images, so exact as this, perhaps never occur; and if every conception, therefore, which *meets* some *circumstance of the complex perception*, which has given rise to it, be the *result of a faculty*, which is to be termed the *faculty of abstraction*, the whole imagery of our thought, which has been ascribed to *an associating* or *suggesting principle*, should have been considered rather as the result of *this* power, in its never-ceasing operation. But, if we allow, that in ordinary association, the principle of simple suggestion can *account* for the rise of conceptions, that omit some circumstances of the past, it would surely be *absurd* to attempt any limitation of the number of circumstances which may be omitted, by the operation of this principle alone, and to refer *every circumstance* that is omit-

ted, *beyond this definite number*, to another faculty, absolutely distinct. The truth is, that it is only of certain parts of any complex perception, that our simple suggestions, in *any case*, are transcripts,—that the same power, which thus, without any effort of our volition, and even without our consciousness, that such a suggestion is on the point of taking place, brings *before us* only *three* out of *four circumstances*, that coexisted in some former perception, might as readily be supposed to bring before us *two* of the *four*, or only *one*—and that the abstraction, in such a case, would be thus as independent of our will, as the simple suggestion; since it would be, in truth, only the simple suggestion, under another name, being termed an *abstraction*, merely because, in certain cases, we might be able to remember the complex whole, with the circumstances omitted in the former partial suggestion, and thus to discover, by *comparison* of the two *co-existing conceptions*, that the one is to the other, as a *whole* to some part of the whole. If this comparison could be made by us in every case, there is not a single conception, in our whole train of memory or fancy, which would not equally deserve to be denominated an abstraction.

Many of the states of mind, which we term abstractions, might thus arise by mere simple suggestion, though we had not, in addition to this capacity, that susceptibility of relative suggestion, by which we discover resemblance, and to which, certainly, we are indebted for the far greater number of feelings, which are termed abstract ideas. The *par-*

tial simple suggestion of the qualities of objects, in our trains of thought, is less wonderful, when we consider how our complex notions of objects are formed. In conceiving the hardness separately from the whiteness of an object, we have no feeling that is absolutely new; we only repeat the process by which our conceptions of these qualities were originally formed. We received them separately, through the medium of different senses; and each, when it recurs separately, is but the transcript of the primary separate sensation.

But even though objects, as originally perceived, had been precisely, in every respect, what they now appear to us,—concretes of many qualities—the capacity of relative suggestion, by which we feel the resemblances of objects, would be of itself, as I have said, sufficient to account for the abstractions, of which philosophers have written so much. It is superfluous, therefore, to ascribe to *another* peculiar faculty what *must* take place, if we admit only the common mental susceptibilities, which all admit. If we are capable of perceiving a *resemblance* of some sort, when we look at a swan and on snow, why should we be astonished that we have invented the word *whiteness*, to signify the common circumstance of resemblance? Or why should we have recourse for this feeling of whiteness itself to any capacity of the mind, but *that* which evolves to us the similarity which we are acknowledged to be capable of feeling?

Whatever our view of the origin of these *partial conceptions* may be, however, the truth of the gene-

ral negative argument, at least, must be admitted, that we have no power of *singling out*, for particular consideration, any *one part* of a complex group; since, in the very intention of separating *it* from the rest, we must *already* have *singled it out* in our *will*, and, consequently, in our *thought*; and that we do not need any new operation, therefore, to *conceive*, what we must *have conceived* before the supposed operation itself could take place.

I have now, then, brought to a conclusion my analysis of the intellectual phenomena; and have shewn, I flatter myself, or, at least, have endeavoured to shew, that all these phenomena, which are commonly ascribed to *many* distinct faculties, are truly referable only to *two*—the capacity of *simple suggestion*, which gives to us conceptions of external objects formerly perceived, and of all the variety of our past internal feelings, as mere conceptions, or fainter images of the past; and the *capacity of relative suggestion*, by which the objects of our perception or conception, that are themselves separate, no longer appear to us separate, but are instantly invested by us with various relations that seem to bind them to each other, as if our mind could give its own *unity* to the innumerable objects which it comprehends, and, like that *mighty Spirit* which once hovered over the confusion of unformed nature, convert *into a universe* what was only *chaos* before.

We have a capacity of *conceiving* objects,—a capacity of feeling the relations of objects,—and to those capacities all that is *intellectual* in our nature

is reducible. In treating of the phenomena of these two powers, I have not merely examined them, as I would have done if no previous arrangements of the same phenomena had been made by philosophers, but I have examined, afterwards, those arrangements also; not omitting, as far as I know, any one of the faculties of which those writers speak. If it has appeared, therefore, in this review, that the distinctions which they have made have been founded on errors, which we have been able to trace; and that the *faculties* of which *they* speak are all, not merely reducible, but easily reducible, to the two classes of the intellectual phenomena, which I have ventured to form,—this coincidence, or facility of corresponding reduction, must be allowed to furnish a very powerful argument in support of my arrangement, since the authors, who have formed systems essentially different, cannot be supposed to have accommodated the phenomena of which they treated to a system which was not their own; though a theorist himself may, in some cases, perhaps with reason, be suspected of an intentional accommodation of this sort, for *the honour of his system*, and, in many more cases, without any intention of distorting a single fact, or omitting a single circumstance unfavourable to his own opinions, may, by the influence of those opinions, as a more habitual form of his thoughts, perceive everything, in a stronger light, which coincides with them, and scarcely perceive those objects with which they do not harmonize.

That *two* simple capacities of the mind should be

sufficient to explain all the variety of intellectual phenomena, which distinguish man from man, in every tribe of savage and civilized life, may indeed seem wonderful. But of such wonders, all science is nothing more than the developement—reducing, and bringing as it were, under a single glance, the innumerable objects that seemed to mock, by their infinity, the very attempt of minute arrangement. The splendid profusion of apparent diversities, in that earth which we inhabit, are reduced by us chemically, to a few elements, that, in their separate classes, are all similar to each other. The motions, which it would be vain for us to think of numbering, of every mass, and of every particle of every mass, have been reduced to a few laws of motion, still more simple; and if we regard the universe itself in the noblest light in which it can be viewed—that which connects it with its Omnipotent Creator,—its whole infinity of wonders are to be considered as the effect but of one simple volition. At the will of God, the world arose, and when it arose, what innumerable relations were present, as it were, and involved in that creative will; the feeling of a single instant comprehending at once, what was afterwards to occupy and to fill, the whole immensity of space, and the whole eternity of time!

LECTURE LII.

RETROSPECT OF THE ORDERS OF THE PHENOMENA OF MIND, ALREADY CONSIDERED.—OF EMOTIONS,—CLASSIFICATION OF THEM, AS IMMEDIATE, RETROSPECTIVE, OR PROSPECTIVE,—AND EACH OF THESE SUBDIVIDED, AS IT INVOLVES, OR DOES NOT INVOLVE SOME MORAL AFFECTION.—I. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS, INVOLVING NO MORAL AFFECTION.—II. CHEERFULNESS—MELANCHOLY.

GENTLEMEN, after the attention which we have paid to the class of external affections of the mind, and to that great order of its internal affections, which I have denominated *intellectual*, the only remaining phenomena which, according to our original division, remain to be considered by us, are our *emotions*.

This order of our internal feelings, is distinguished from the *external* class, by the circumstances which I have already pointed out, as the basis of the arrangement,—that they are not the *immediate* consequences of the *presence of external* objects; but, when excited by objects without, are excited *only indirectly*, through the medium of those direct feel-

ings, which are commonly termed *sensations* or *perceptions*. They differ from the other order of the same internal class,—from the *intellectual* states of mind, which constitute our simple or relative suggestions of memory or judgment,—by that peculiar vividness of feeling, which every one understands, but which it is impossible to express, by any verbal definition; as truly impossible, as to define *sweetness*, or *bitterness*, a *sound*, or a *smell*, in any other way, than by a statement of the circumstances in which they arise. There is no reason to fear, however, from this impossibility of verbal definition, that any one, who has tasted what is sweet or bitter, or enjoyed the pleasures of melody and fragrance, will be at all in danger of confounding these terms; and, as little reason is there to fear, that our *emotions* will be confounded with our *intellectual* states of mind, by those who have simply *remembered* and *compared*, and have also *loved*, or *hated*, *desired*, or *feared*.

Before we proceed to consider the order of emotions, it may be interesting to cast a short glance over the other orders of the phenomena of mind, before considered by us.

In the view which we have taken of the *external or sensitive affections of the mind*, we have traced those laws, so simple and so efficacious, which give to the humblest individual, by the medium of his corporeal organs, the possession of that almost celestial scene, in which he is placed, till he arrives at that nobler abode which awaits him,—connecting him not merely with the earth which he treads, but

indirectly, also with those other minds, which are journeying with him in the same career, and that enjoy at once, by the same medium of the senses, the same beauties and glories that are shed around them, with a profusion so divine, as almost to indicate, of themselves, that a path so magnificent is the path to Heaven. A few rays of light thus reveal to us, not forms and colours only, which are obviously *visible*, but *latent thoughts*, which no eye can see; a few particles of vibrating air, enable mind to communicate to mind, its most spiritual feelings,—to awake and be awakened mutually to science and benevolent exertion, as if truths, and generous wishes, and happiness itself, could be diffused in the very voice that scarcely floats upon the ear.

Such are our mere *sensitive feelings*, resulting from the influence of external things, on our corresponding organs, which are themselves external. The view of the *intellectual* states of the mind, to which we next proceeded, laid open to us phenomena still more astonishing—those capacities, by which we are enabled to discover in nature *more* than the causes of those brief separate sensations which follow the affections of our nerves,—to perceive in it *proportion* and *design*, and all those relations of parts to parts, by which it becomes to us a demonstration of the wisdom that formed it,—capacities, by which, in a single moment, we pass again over all the busiest adventures of all the years of our life, or, with a still more unlimited range of thoughts, are present, as it were, in that remote infinity of space, where no earthly form has ever been, or, in the still more my-

sterious infinity of *time*,—in ages, when *the universe was not*, nor anything, but that *Eternal One*, whose immutable existence is all which we conceive of *eternity*.

Such are the wonders, of which we acquire the knowledge, in those phenomena of the mind, which have been already reviewed by us. The order of feelings, which we are next to consider, are not less important—nor important only in *themselves*, but also in their relation to *those other phenomena* which have been the subjects of our inquiry; since they comprehend all the higher delights which attend the exercise of our sensitive and intellectual functions. The mere pleasures of *sense*, indeed, as direct and simple pleasures, we do not owe to them; but we owe to them everything which confers on those pleasures a more ennobling value, by the enjoyments of social affection which are mingled with them, or the gratitude which, in the enjoyment of them, looks to their Divine Author. We might, perhaps, in like manner, have been so constituted, with respect to our *intellectual* states of mind, as to have had all the varieties of these, our *remembrances*, *judgments*, and *creations of fancy*, without our *emotions*. But without the emotions which accompany them, of how little value would the mere *intellectual functions* have been! It is to our vivid feelings of this class, we must look for those *tender regards*, which make our *remembrances* sacred—for that love of *truth* and *glory*, and *mankind*, without which, to animate and reward us, in our discovery and diffusion of knowledge, the continued exercise of *judgment* would be

a *fatigue* rather than a *satisfaction*—and for all that *delightful wonder* which we feel, when we contemplate the admirable creations of fancy, or the still more admirable beauties of the unfading model—that model which is ever before us, and the imitation of which, as has been truly said, is the only *imitation* that is itself *originality*. By our other mental functions, we are mere *spectators* of the machinery of the universe, living and inanimate; by our *emotions*, we are *admirers* of *nature*, *lovers of man*, *adorers of God*. The earth, without them, would be only a field of colour, inhabited by beings who may contribute, indeed, *more permanently*, to our means of physical comfort, than any one of the inanimate forms which we behold, but who, beyond the moment in which they are capable of affecting us with pain or pleasure, would be only like the *other forms and colours*, which would meet us whenever we turned our weary and listless eyes; and God himself, the source of all good, and the object of all worship, would be only the Being by whom the world was made.

In the picture which I have now given of our emotions, however, I have presented them to you *in their fairest aspects*; there are aspects, which they assume, as *terrible* as these are *attractive*; but even, terrible as they are, they are not the less *interesting* objects of our contemplation. They are the *enemies* with which our moral combat, in the warfare of life, is to be carried on; and, if there be enemies that are to assail us, it is good for us to know all the arms and all the arts with which we are to be assailed;

as it is good for us, to know all the misery which would await our defeat, as much as all the happiness which would crown our success, that our conflict may be the stronger, and our *victory*, therefore, the more *sure*.

In the list of our emotions of this formidable class, is to be found every passion which can render life guilty and miserable,—a *single hour of which*, if that hour be an hour of uncontrolled dominion, may destroy happiness for ever, and leave little more of virtue than is necessary for giving all its horror to *remorse*. There are feelings, as blasting to every desire of good that may still linger in the heart of the frail victim who is not yet wholly corrupted, as those poisonous gales of the desert, which not merely lift in whirlwinds the sands that have often been tossed before, but *wither* even the few fresh leaves, which, on some spot of scanty verdure, have still been flourishing amid the general sterility.

When we consider the *pure* and *generous*, as well as the *selfish* and *malignant* desires of man, in the effects to which they have led,—that is to say, when we consider the varieties of some of our mental affections of this class,—we may be said to consider *everything* which man has *done and suffered*, because we consider everything from which his actions and his very sufferings have flowed. All civil history is nothing more than the record of the passions of a few leaders of mankind. "Happy, therefore," it has been said, "the people whose history is the most wearisome to read. Whatever the Cæsars, and Alexanders, and the other disturbers of the peace

of nations, have perpetrated, may have been planned with relation to the particular circumstances of the time; but this very plan, even when accommodated to temporary circumstances, was the work of some human emotion which *is* not of a *month*, or *year*, or *age*, but *of every time*. In perusing the narratives of what they did, we feel, that we are reading not so much the history of the individuals, as the history of our common nature,—of those passions by which *we* are agitated, and which, while the race of mankind continue to subsist, will always, but for the securer restraints which political wisdom and the general state of society may have imposed, be sufficiently ready to repeat the same project of personal advancement, at the same expense of individual virtue and public happiness." The study of the mental phenomena, in their general aspect, as it is the study of the sources of human action, is thus, in one sense, a sort of compendious history of the civil affairs of the world, a history not merely of the past and the present, but of the future also. It resembles, in this respect, what we are told of the hero of a metaphysical romance,—that in physiognomy his penetration was such, that "from the picture of any person he could write his life, and from the features of the parents, draw the features of any child that was to be born." Such, in some measure, though certainly far less exact, is that future history of the world, which a speculator on the state and prospects of civil society draws from a knowledge of the nature of man. He may err, indeed, in his picture of unexisting things; but every political regulation must,

in part, at least, proceed on views of events that do not yet exist, as thus prophetically imaged in the very nature of the mind, or it scarcely can deserve the name of an act of legislative wisdom; and *he* is truly the wisest politician, who is, in this sense, the most accurate *historian of the future.*

In now entering on the consideration of that order of our feelings, which I have comprehended under the name of Emotions, it may seem doubtful whether it would be more expedient to treat of them simply as elementary feelings, or in those complex forms in which they usually exist, and have received certain definite characteristic names that are familiar to you. This latter mode appears to me, on the whole, more advisable, as affording many advantages, direct and indirect, and allowing equally the necessary analysis in each particular case. If I were to treat of them only as elementary feelings, they might be classed under a very few heads,—the whole, as I conceive, or certainly, at least, the greater number of them, under the following: Joy, grief, desire, astonishment, respect, contempt, and the two opposite species of vivid feelings, which distinguish to us the actions that are denominated vicious or virtuous. But, though the vivid feelings, to which we give these names, may, from their general analogy, admit of being comprehended in this brief arrangement, it must be remembered, that brief as the vocabulary is, it comprehends feelings, which, though analogous, are still not precisely the same,—that the single word *joy*, for example, expresses many

varieties of delightful feelings, the single word *desire*, many feelings, which, in combination with their particular objects, are so modified by these, as to appear to us, in their complex forms, almost as different as any other feelings of our mind which we class under different names. It is in their complex state that they impress themselves most strongly on our observation in others, and form, in ourselves, all that renders most interesting to us the present and the future, and all that is most vivid in our remembrances of the past. Considered, therefore, in this aspect, they admit of much illustration from the whole field of human life, and afford opportunities for many practical references to conduct, and many analyses of the motives that secretly influence it,—for which there would scarcely be a place, if they were to be considered simply as elementary feelings. I repeat, therefore, that the order in which I intend to treat of them, will regard them in their ordinary state of complication with particular conceptions or other emotions, though I shall be careful, at the same time, to state to you, in every case, as minutely as may be in my power, the elements of which the complex whole is composed.

In treating of them in this view, the most obvious principle of general arrangement seems to me to be one of which I have already more than once availed myself,—their relation to *time*,—as *immediate*, or involving no notion of time whatever,—as *retrospective*, in relation to the past,—or as *prospective*, in relation to the future. *Admiration*, *remorse*, *hope*, may serve as particular instances, to illustrate my

meaning in this distinction which I would make. We admire what is before us,—we feel remorse for some past crime,—we hope some future good.

In conformity with this arrangement of our emotions, as immediate, retrospective, prospective, the first set which we have to consider, are those which arise without involving necessarily any notion of time.

These *immediate emotions*, as I have termed them, may be subdivided, according to the most interesting of their relations,—as they do not involve any feeling that can be termed *moral*, or as they do involve some moral affection.

Of the former kind, which do not involve necessarily any moral affection, are *cheerfulness*, *melancholy*,—our *wonder* at what is new and unexpected,—our *mental* weariness of what is long continued without interest,—our feelings of *beauty*, and that opposite emotion, which has no corresponding and equal name, since *ugliness* can scarcely be regarded as coextensive with it,—our feelings of sublimity and ludicrousness.

To the latter subdivision may be referred the vivid feelings, that constitute to our heart what we distinguish by the names of *vice* and *virtue*,—if these vivid feelings be considered simply as *emotions*, distinct from the judgments, which may at the same time measure actions, in reference to some particular standard of morality, or to the amount of particular or general good, which they may have tended to produce, and which might so measure

them, without any moral *emotion*, as a mathematician measures the proportion of one figure to another,—our emotions of love and hate,—of sympathy with the happy and with the miserable,—of pride and humility, in the various forms which these assume.

These, if not *all*, are at least the most important of our *immediate* emotions.

The first emotions, then, which we have to consider, of that order which has no *reference to time*, are *Cheerfulness* and *Melancholy*.

Cheerfulness, which, at every moment, may be considered only as a modification of joy, is a sort of *perpetual gladness*. It is that state, which, in every one,—even in those of the most gloomy disposition,—remains for some time after any event of unexpected happiness,—though the event itself may not be present to their conception at the time;—and which, in many of gayer temperament, seems to be almost a constant frame of the mind. In the early period of life, this alacrity of spirit is like that *bodily* alacrity, with which every limb, as it bounds along, seems to have a delightful consciousness of its vigour. To suspend the *mental cheerfulness*, for any length of time, is, *then*, as difficult, as to keep fixed, for any length of time, those muscles, to which *exercise* is almost a species of *repose*, and repose itself *fatigue*. In more advanced life, this sort of *animal gladness* is rarer. We are not happy, without knowing why we are happy; and though we may still be susceptible of joy, perhaps as intense, or even *more* intense,

than in our years of unreflecting merriment, our joy must arise from a *cause* of corresponding importance. Yet, even down to the close of extreme old age, there still recur occasionally some gleams of this almost instinctive happiness, like a vision of other years, or, like those brilliant and unexpected coruscations, which sometimes flash along the midnight of a wintry sky, and of which we are too ignorant of the circumstances that produce them, to know when to predict their return.

Of *Melancholy*, I may remark, in like manner, that it is a state of mind, which even the *gayest must* feel, for some time, after any calamity, and which many feel for the greater part of life, without any particular calamity, to which they can ascribe it. Without knowing why they should be sorrowful, they still *are* sorrowful,—even though the weathercock should *not* have moved a single point nearer to the east, nor a single additional cloud given a little more shade to the vivid brightness of the sun.

I need not speak of that *extreme depression*, which constitutes the most miserable form of insanity, the most miserable disease,—that fixed and deadly gloom of soul, to which there is no sunshine in the summer sky,—no verdure or blossom in the summer field,—no kindness in affection,—no purity in the very remembrance of innocence itself,—no Heaven, but hell,—no God, but a demon of wrath. With what strange feelings of *more than commiseration*, must we imagine Cowper to have written that picturesque description, of which he was himself the subject :—

" Look where he comes. In this embower'd alcove
Stand close conceal'd, and see a statue move;
Lips busy, and eyes fix'd, foot falling slow,
Arms hanging idly down, hands clasp'd below!—
That tongue is silent now;—that silent tongue
Could argue once, could jest, or join the song,—
Could give advice, could censure or commend,
Or charm the sorrows of a drooping friend.
Now,* neither heathy wilds, nor scenes as fair
As ever recompensed the peasant's care,
Nor gales that catch the scent of blooming groves,
And waft it to the mourner, as he roves,
Can call up life, into his faded eye—
That passes all he sees, unheeded by.†

Cases of this dreadful kind, however, are fortunately rare;—but some degree of melancholy all must have experienced—that internal sadness, which we diffuse unconsciously from our own mind over the brightest and gayest objects without, almost in the same manner, and with the same unfailing certainty, as we invest them with the *colours*, which are only in *our mental vision*.

The scenery, which Eloisa describes, is sufficiently gloomy of itself.—But with what additional gloom does she cloud it in her description:—

" The darksome pines, that, o'er yon rock reclined,
Wave high, and murmur to the hollow wind,
The wandering streams that shine between the hills,
The grots that echo to the tinkling rills,

* Then,—*Orig.*

† Cowper's Poems. Retirement, v. 283—286. 289—292. 331—2. 337—340.

The dying gales, that pant upon the trees,
The lakes that quiver to the curling breeze;—
No more these scenes my meditation aid,
Or lull to rest the visionary maid:
But o'er the twilight groves and dusky caves,
Long-sounding aisles and intermingled graves,
Black Melancholy sits, and round her throws
A deathlike silence, and a dread repose.
Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene,
Shades every flower, and darkens every green,
Deepens the murmur of the falling floods,
And breathes a browner horror on the woods." *

Of the melancholy of common life, there are two species that have little resemblance. There is a *sullen gloom*, which disposes to unkindness, and every bad passion; a fretfulness, in all the daily and hourly intercourse of familiar life, which, if it weary at last the assiduities of friendship, sees only the neglect which it has *forced*, and not the perversity of humour which gave occasion to it, and soon learns to hate, therefore, what it considers as ingratitude and injustice,—or, which, if friendship be still assiduous as before, sees, in these very assiduities, a proof not of the strength of that affection, which has forgotten the acrimony to sooth the supposed uneasiness which gave it rise, but a proof that there has been no offensive acrimony to be forgotten, and persists, therefore, in every peevish caprice, till the domestic tyranny become habitual. This melancholy temper, so poisonous to the happiness, not of the individual only, but of all those who are within the circle of its influ-

* Pope's Epistle of Eloise to Abelard, v. 155—170.

ence, and who feel their misery the more, because it may, perhaps, arise from one whom they strive, and vainly strive, to love, is the temper of a vulgar mind. But there is a melancholy of a gentler species, a melancholy which, as it arises, in a great measure, from a view of the sufferings of man, disposes to a warmer love of man the *sufferer*, and which is almost as essential to the finer emotions of virtue, as it is to the nicer sensibilities of poetic genius. This social and intellectual effect of philosophic melancholy is described with a beautiful selection of moral images, by the Author of the *Seasons*.

" He comes! he comes! in every breeze the Power
Of Philosophic Melancholy comes!
His near approach the sudden-starting tear,
The glowing cheek, the mild dejected air,
The soften'd feature, and the beating heart,
Pierc'd deep with many a virtuous pang, declare.
O'er all the soul his sacred influence breathes!
Inflames imagination; through the breast
Infuses every tenderness; and far
Beyond dim earth exalts the swelling thought.
Ten thousand thousand fleet ideas, such
As never mingled with the vulgar dream,
Crowd fast into the mind's creative eye.
As fast the correspondent passions rise,
As varied, and as high: Devotion rais'd
To rapture, and divine astonishment;
The love of Nature, unconfin'd, and, chief,
Of human race; the large ambitious wish,
To make them blest; the sigh for suffering worth
Lost in obscurity; the noble scorn
Of tyrant pride; the fearless great resolve;
The wonder which the dying patriot draws,
Inspiring glory through remotest time;

Th' awaken'd throb for virtue, and for fame;
The sympathies of love, and friendship dear:
With all the social offspring of the heart.*

The same influence is, by another poet, made peculiarly impressive, by a very happy artifice. In Akenside's Ode to Cheerfulness, which opens with a description of many images and impressions of gloom, and in which the Power, who alone can dispel them, is invoked to perform this divine office, he returns at last to those images of tender sorrow, which he would be unwilling to lose, and for the continuance of which, therefore, he invokes that very cheerfulness, which he had seemed before to invoke for a gayer purpose:—

"Do thou conduct my fancy's dreams
To such indulgent placid themes,
As just the struggling breast may cheer
And just suspend the starting tear,
Yet leave that sacred sense of woe,
Which none but friends and lovers know."†

How universally a certain degree of disposition to melancholy, is supposed to be connected with *genius*, at least with poetic genius, is manifest from every description which has been given by those who have formed imaginary pictures of the rise and progress of this high character of thought. The descriptions, I have said, are imaginary, but they still shew sufficiently the extent of that observation, on which so general an agreement must have been founded.

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* Thomson's Seasons. Autumn, v. 1002—1027.
† V. 157—162.

The melancholy, indeed, is not inconsistent with occasional emotions of an opposite kind; on the contrary, it is always supposed to be coupled with a disposition to mirth, on occasions in which others see perhaps as little cause of merriment, as they before saw of melancholy,—but the general character to which the mind most readily returns, is that of sadness,—a sadness, however, of that gentle and benevolent kind, of which I before spoke. The picture which Beattie gives of his Minstrel, is exactly of this kind; and even if it had not absolute truth, must be allowed to have at least that *relative* truth, which consists in agreement with the notion, which every one, of himself, would have been disposed previously to form:—

"And yet poor Edwin was no vulgar boy;
Deep thought oft seem'd to fix his infant eye:
Dainties he heeded not, nor gaud, nor toy,
Save one short pipe, of rudest minstrelsy.
Silent when glad,—affectionate though shy;
And now his look was most demurely sad,
And now he laugh'd aloud, yet none knew why;
The neighbours stared and sigh'd, yet bless'd the lad;
Some deem'd him wondrous wise, and some believed him mad.

"In truth, he was a strange and wayward wight,
Fond of each gentle and each dreadful scene,
In darkness and in storm he found delight,
No less than when on ocean-wave serene,
The Southern sun diffus'd his dazzling shene.
Even sad vicissitudes amused his soul;
And if a sigh would sometimes intervene,
And down his cheek a tear of pity roll,
A sigh, a tear so sweet he wish'd not to control."*

* Book I. Stanza xvi. and xxii.

The state of melancholy, as I have already remarked, when it is not constitutional and permanent, but temporary, is a state which intervenes between the *absolute affliction* of any *great calamity*, and that *peace* to which, by the benevolent arrangements of Heaven, even melancholy itself ultimately *leads*. As it is nearer to the time of the calamity, and the consequent profound affliction,—the melancholy itself is more profound, and gradually softens into tranquillity, after a period, that is in some degree proportioned to the violence of the affliction.

"Finem dolendi, etiam qui *consilio* non *fecerat*, tempore *invenit*,"* says Seneca. What then, you say, shall I forget my friend? No! He is not to be forgotten. But soon, indeed, *would* he be forgotten, if his memory were to last only with the continuance of your grief. Fixed and sad as your brow now may be, it will soon require but a trifle to loose it into smiles. "Quid, ergo, inquis, obliviscar amici? Brevem illi apud te memoriam promittis, si cum *dolore* mansura est. Jam istam frontem ad risum quælibet fortuita res transferet. Non differo in longius tempus, quo desiderium omne mulcetur, quo etiam accerimi luctus residant; cum primum te observare desieris, imago ista tristitiæ discedet. Nunc ipse custodis dolorem, sed custodienti quoque elabitur, eoque citiùs quo est acrior desinit."†

"The great philosopher Citophilus," says Voltaire, in one of the most pleasing of his little tales,

* Epist. 63.

† Epist. 63. A passage nearer the beginning of the Letter than that first quoted.

" was one day in company with a female friend, who was in the utmost affliction, and who had very good reason to be so. Madam, said he to her, the Queen of England, the daughter of our great Henry, was as unfortunate as you. She was almost drowned in crossing our narrow channel, and she saw her royal husband perish on the scaffold.—I am very sorry for her, said the lady; and she began to weep her own misfortunes.

" But, said Citophilus, think of Mary Stewart. She loved, very honourably, a most noble musician, who sung the finest tenor in the world. Her husband killed her musician before her very eyes; and afterwards her good friend, and good relation, Queen Elizabeth, who first kept her in prison eighteen years, contrived to have her beheaded on a scaffold, covered with the finest black.—That was very cruel, answered the lady; and she sunk back into her melancholy as before.

" You have perhaps heard of the beautiful Joan of Naples, said the comforter. She was seized, you know, and strangled. I have a confused remembrance of it, said the lady.

" I must tell you, added the other, the adventures of a queen, who was dethroned in my own time, after supper, and who died in a desert island.—I know the whole story, she replied.

" Well, then, how can you think of being so miserable, when so many queens and great ladies have been miserable before you. Think of *Hecuba!* Think of *Niobe!*—Ah! said the lady, if I had lived in their time, or in the time of those beautiful prin-

cesses of whom you speak; and, if to comfort *them*, you had told them *my* griefs, do you think they would have listened to you?

"The next day the philosopher lost his only son, and was at the very point of death with affliction. The lady got a list made out of all the *kings* who had lost their children, and carried it to the philosopher. He read it,—found the list to be very accurate, and did not weep the less. Three months afterwards, they met again, and were quite astonished, at meeting, to find themselves so gay. They resolved immediately to erect a beautiful statue to Time, and ordered this inscription to be put upon it, '*To the Comforter.*'" *

The tale, it must be admitted, is a very faithful picture of the power of time, the universal comforter, and of the comparative inefficacy of the ordinary topics of consolation. But how is it, that time does produce this effect? Some remarks, which I formerly made in treating of association, will aid us, I think, in explaining the mystery.

A very easy solution of it, is sometimes attempted by the analogy of bodily pains and pleasures, which become more tolerable in the one case, and less delightful in the other case, when long continued; and the analogy must be admitted to a considerable extent—but is far from affording the complete solution required. We feel bodily pain, indeed, less acutely, after long torture, because our

* Les deux Consolés, Œuvres, 4to edit. of 1771, t. xiv. p. 86, 87, with certain exclusions.

nervous frame is oppressed by the continued suffering. But, in the case of grief, there is not this oppression; and when we have ceased to grieve for one calamity, we are still as susceptible as before of the emotion itself, and require only some *new* calamity to feel again, with the same acuteness, all the agony which we suffered.

It is not mere corporeal exhaustion, therefore, that can account for the diminution of sorrow. It is because the source of the sorrow itself is removed as it were at a distance, and has admitted, in the meanwhile, of various soothing associations; and, still more, of various other emotions, which, without any relation to our grief itself, have modified and softened it, by exciting an interest that was incompatible with it, or rather that changed its very nature, by the union with it which they may have formed.

The melancholy emotion, which remains after any great affliction,—after the death, for example, of a husband or a child, is, of course, when recent, combined with few feelings that do not harmonize with the grief itself, and augment it, perhaps, rather than diminish it. In a short term, however, from the mere unavoidable events of life, other feelings, suggested by these events, combine with that melancholy, with which they *coexist*, so as to form with it one complex state of mind. When the melancholy remembrance recurs, it recurs, therefore, not as it was before, but as modified by the combination of these new feelings. In the process of time, other feelings, that may casually, but frequently coexist

with it, combine with it in like manner; the complex state of mind partaking thus gradually less and less of the nature of that pure affliction, which constituted the original sorrow, till at length it becomes so much softened and diversified by repeated combinations, as scarcely to retain the same character, and to be rather sadness, or a sort of gentle tenderness, than affliction. The coexistence of the melancholy thought, when it recurs, with other new feelings that may be accidentally excited at the time, constitutes, then, I conceive, one of the chief circumstances on which the softening influence depends.

It must be remembered too, as a very strong circumstance additional, that the effect is not confined to the *direct feeling itself*, but that every surrounding object, which before was associating perhaps chiefly with the object of regret, and recalled this object more frequently than any other, becomes afterwards associated with other objects, which it recalls more frequently than the object of regret, in consequence of that secondary law of suggestion, by which feelings, recently coexisting or proximate, rise again more readily in mutual succession.

There is scarcely an object which can meet a father's eye, soon after the death of his child, which does not bring that child before him; thus aggravating, at every moment, the sorrow which was felt the very moment preceding. If, even at this period of recent affliction, we could, by any contrivance, prevent these melancholy suggestions, by suggestions of

a different kind, it is evident, that we should not merely prevent the *aggravations* of distress which they occasion, but could not fail even to *alleviate* what was *felt before*, by the revival of thoughts and emotions, which would have no peculiar relation to the object lost. This, which *we* cannot by any contrivance completely produce, is the effect, which *time* necessarily produces, by rendering stronger the suggestion of recent objects and events, and thus making every thing which meets our eyes, a memorial of every thing more than of him whom we lament. What *time* more fully produces, is produced, in some degree, by mere change of *scene*,—especially if the country through which we pass be new to us—and is produced evidently in both cases, by the operation of the same principle.

Another very abundant source of the misery which is felt, in such a recent affliction, is the relation of the object lost to all the plans which have engaged us, and all the hopes which we have been forming. These, as the recent objects of thought, and its liveliest objects, must of course, by the operation of the common laws of suggestion, frequently arise to the mind. They all now, however, seem frustrated, and our whole life, as it were, in those feelings which alone constituted life to us, suddenly rent or broken. He who listens to the lamentations of a disconsolate parent, for the loss of an only child, cannot fail to perceive how much of the affliction depends on this very circumstance, and how readily the delightful cares of education in past years, and the equally de-

lightful hopes of years that were to come, arise to embitter the anguish of the present. These cares and hopes *must then* arise, indeed, because they were the chief feelings with which the mind has been occupied. In the progress of time, however, other cares and other hopes, unconnected with the last object of regard, must necessarily engage the mind; and these, as more recent, arise, of course, more readily by suggestion, and thus fill—not the busy hours of action only, but the very hours of meditation and repose.

On these causes *combined*, I conceive the soothing influence of time to depend. The melancholy is less frequently excited, because fewer objects now recal it, and it is at the same time gentler when it is excited; because it rises now, mingled, as it were, with other feelings that have at different times coexisted with it, and modified it; and these circumstances, if they be not sufficient to account for the tranquillity, or serene grief, which ultimately arises, must at least be allowed to be circumstances that *concur powerfully* with whatever other unknown circumstance may be instrumental in producing the same happy influence.

Of the facts which this theory of the mollifying influence of time assumes, there can be no question. The same principle, by which the objects that surround us were originally connected with the conception of the object of our regret, must, of course, continue its operation, when that object itself has certainly ceased to exist, and must connect new ob-

jects, therefore, as it before connected the past. In like manner, the principle which led to the combination of feelings that gave peculiar vividness to any one of our emotions, must continue to combine new feelings with the very affliction; and to combine new feelings with it, is in some degree to alter its nature, in the same way as the thousand offices of kindness, to which reciprocal friendship gives occasion, alter continually, by augmenting with their own united influence, those simple feelings of regard in which the friendship had its origin.

Such, then, is the bountiful provision of Heaven, that man *cannot* long be wretched, from griefs to which his own guilt has not led,—and that sorrow, even though it had nothing else to comfort it, derives a never-failing comfort from that very continuance of affliction, which, but for our experience, might have seemed capable only of aggravating it. Time is truly *the comforter*, at once lessening the tendency to suggestion of images of sorrow, and softening that very sorrow when the images arise.

LECTURE LIII.

I. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS, WHICH DO NOT NECESSARILY INVOLVE ANY MORAL FEELING, CONTINUED.—II. WONDER AT WHAT IS NEW AND STRANGE—UNEASY LANGUOR WHEN THE SAME UNVARIED FEELINGS HAVE LONG CONTINUED.—III. ON BEAUTY AND ITS REVERSE.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I entered on the consideration of our Emotions; and after stating the small number of elementary feelings to which they seem to admit of being reduced, and the reasons which led me to prefer the consideration of them in the complex state in which they usually exist, I proceeded to arrange these complex varieties of them, in three divisions, according to the relation which they bear to time, as *immediate, retrospective, prospective.* There are certain emotions which arise or continue in our mind, without referring to any particular object or time, such as cheerfulness or melancholy; or which regard their objects *simply as existing*, without involving, necessarily, any notion of time whatever,—such as *wonder*, or our feelings of *beauty* and *sublimity*;—these I denominate *im-*

mediate. There are certain others which regard their objects as *past,* and which cannot exist without this *notion of the past,* such as remorse, or revenge, or gratitude;—these I denominate *retrospective* emotions. There are certain others, which regard their objects as *future,* such as the whole tribe of our *desires;*—these I denominate *prospective* emotions.

It was to the first of these divisions, of course, that I proceeded in the first place; and since man, in the most important light in which we can consider him, is a social being, united by his emotions with whatever he can love or pity, or respect or adore, these, and other *moral* emotions, seemed to form a very proper subdivision of this particular *order,* as distinct from the emotions, of the same order *in which no moral feeling is involved.*

The *immediate emotions,* in which *no moral feeling is* involved, and which admit, therefore, of being arranged apart, we found to be the following—*cheerfulness, melancholy,*—our *wonder* at what is *new* or *unexpected,* and that emotion of languid uneasiness, which arises from the long continuance of the *same objects,* or of objects so *nearly similar,* as scarcely to afford the *refreshment* of variety—our feeling of *beauty,* and the emotion opposite to that of beauty —the emotion excited by objects which we term *sublime,* and the emotion, almost opposite to this, excited by objects which we term *ludicrous.*

I proceeded, accordingly, to consider these in their order; and in my last Lecture, offered some re-

marks on the *first two* in the series,—cheerfulness and melancholy, that are obviously mere forms of two of the elementary feelings mentioned by me. I now then proceed to the consideration of the *next* in our arrangement—our feeling of *wonder* at what is *new* and *strange*, and of uneasy languor, when the same unvaried feelings have long continued.

Long before we are capable of philosophizing on the different states of our *mind*, in different circumstances, or even of preserving any distinct memory of these states, for subsequent speculations on their nature, we have already become *familiar* with many of the most important successions of events in that part of the physical universe, with which we are immediately connected, so that it is impossible for us to form any conjecture which can be said to approach to certainty, as to the positive nature of our *primary feelings*, when these successions of events were first observed by us. It seems most probable, however, that the feeling of *wonder*, which now attends any striking event that is unexpected by us, would *not* arise in the infant mind, on the occurrence of events, all of which might be regarded as equally new to it; since *wonder* implies not the mere feeling of *novelty*, but the knowledge of some *other circumstances* which were expected to occur, and is therefore, I conceive, inconsistent with *absolute ignorance*.

At present, with the experience which we have acquired of the order of physical changes, the situation of the mind is very different, on the occurrence of any seeming irregularity. The phenomena of

nature are conceived by us, not as *separate events*, but as uniformly consequent in certain series. We, therefore, do not *only see the present*, but, *seeing* the present, we *expect* the future. When the circumstances, which we observe in any case, are very similar to the circumstances formerly observed by us, we anticipate the future with confidence,—when the circumstances are considered different, but have many strong similarities to the past, we make the same anticipation, but not with confidence,—and if the event should prove to be different from the event anticipated by us, we treasure it up, for regulating our future anticipations in similar circumstances; but we do this, without any emotion of astonishment at the new event itself. It is when we have *anticipated with confidence*, and our anticipation has been disappointed by some unexpected result, that the *astonishment* arises, and arises always, with greater or less vividness of feeling, according to the strength of that belief, which the expectation involved.

When *new* and *striking* objects occur, therefore, in any of the physical trains of events,—or when *familiar objects* occur to us, in situations in which we are far from expecting to find them, a *certain emotion arises*, to which we give the name of *astonishment*, or *surprise*, or *wonder*, but which, whatever the name may be, is truly the same state of mind,—at least, as an emotion, the *same*;—though different names may be given, with distinctive propriety, to this *one emotion*,—when combined or not combined with a process of rapid intellectual inquiry, or with other feelings of the same class.

When the emotion arises *simply*, for instance, it may be termed, and is more commonly termed, *surprise*;—when the surprise, thus excited by the unexpected occurrence, leads us to *dwell* upon the object which excited it, and to consider, in our mind, what the circumstances may have been, which have led to the appearance of the object, the *surprise* is more commonly termed *wonder*, which, as we may dwell on the *object long*, and consider the possibilities of many circumstances, that may have led to the unexpected introduction of it, is, of course, more lasting than the instant surprise, which was only its first stage.

Still, however, though the terms in this sense be not strictly synonimous, but expressive of states, more or less complex, the *wonder* differs from the *surprise*, only by the new elements which are added to this primary emotion, and not by any original diversity of the emotion itself. Whether it be a *familiar object*, which we perceive in *unexpected circumstances*, or an object that is *itself* as *new* as it is *unexpected*, the *first* feeling of astonishment,—which is the emotion now considered by us,—is the same in kind, however different the series of subsequent feelings may be. We may feel, for example, only the momentary surprise itself, or we may begin to consider what circumstances are the most likely to have occasioned the presence of the object, and our surprise is, by this union of uncertain and fluctuating thought, converted into *wonder*,—or we may be struck at the same time with the beauty or grandeur of the new object, and our mixed emotion of

the novelty and beauty combined, will obtain the name of admiration,—the simple primary emotion, which we term *surprise* or *astonishment*, being in all these cases the same, and being only modified by the feelings of various kinds, that afterwards arise, and coexist with it.

In the History of Astronomy,—that very elegant specimen of scientific history, which Dr A. Smith has bequeathed to us, in one of the Essays of his posthumous volume,—he commences his inquiry, with some remarks on the emotion which we are now considering,—and contends, as many other philosophers have contended, for an essential distinction of the varieties of the emotion, both with respect to the objects that excite these varieties, and to the nature of the feelings themselves.

What is *new* and *singular*, he conceives to excite that feeling,—or *sentiment*, as he terms it,—which, in strict propriety, is called *wonder*; what is *unexpected*, that different feeling which is commonly termed *surprise*.

"We wonder," he says, "at all extreme and uncommon objects,—at all the rarer phenomena of nature,—at meteors, comets, eclipses,—at singular plants and animals,—and at every thing, in short, with which we have before been either little, or not at all acquainted; and we still wonder, though forewarned of what we are to see."

"We are surprised," he continues, "at those things which we have seen *often*, but which we least of all expected to meet with, in the place where we find them; we are surprised at the sudden appear-

ance of a friend, whom we have seen a thousand times, but whom we did not imagine we were to see *then*." *

This distinction, which Dr Smith makes of *wonder* and surprise, seems, when we first consider it, a very obvious and accurate one; and yet I conceive, that if we analyse it more minutely, the difference, as I have already endeavoured to shew, is more in the circumstances in which the emotions arise; and the thoughts, which are the *consequence* of the emotions, than in *these* emotions themselves, as simple *feelings* of the *mind*. The circumstances in which they arise, are obviously very different; since, in the one case, the object is *familiar*, in the other *new*, and the *consequences* are usually *as* different; since, in the one case, we are generally able to discover, by mere inquiry, what has led to the *presence* of the familiar object, in the unexpected situation,—and when we know this, we know every thing; or cease to think of it, if such inquiry be ineffectual. In this case, therefore, there is little fluctuation of doubtful and varying conjecture, blending with the emotion and modifying it. In the other case, the very *novelty* of the object is gratifying to our *love of the new*, which is one of the strongest of our desires, and leads us to *dwell on it*, with particular interest, while this very novelty, or uncommonness, which stimulates our curiosity to observe and inquire, renders inquiry less easy to be satisfied; and *one* inquiry,

* Page 2d of Essays on Philosophical Subjects, by the late Dr Smith—With his life prefixed, by D. Stewart, Esq.

even when satisfactorily answered, far from giving us *all* the knowledge which we desire, leaves of course, when the object is one with which we are unacquainted, many new properties to be investigated. In the one case, that in which a familiar object appears to us, where we did not expect to find it, there is *only surprise*, or little more; in the other case, when the object *itself* is *new* to us, there is *surprise, followed* by many very doubtful conjectures; and, during these conjectures, from the little satisfaction which they afford, a constant *recurrence* and *mingling* of the *surprise*, with the imperfect inquiries. It is not the emotion, therefore, which is different itself, but the *mixture of inquiry and emotion*, which, coexisting, form a state of mind different from the simple emotion itself. "The imagination and memory," to use Dr Smith's own words, "exert themselves to no purpose, and in vain look around all their classes of ideas, in order to find one, under which it may be arranged. They fluctuate to no purpose, from thought to thought; and we remain still *uncertain* and undetermined, *where to place it*, or *what to think* of it. It is this fluctuation, and vain recollection, together with the emotion or movement of the spirits that they excite, which constitute the sentiment properly called *wonder*, and which occasion that staring, and sometimes that *rolling of the eyes*, that suspension of the breath, and that swelling of the heart, which we may all observe, both in ourselves and others, when wondering at some new object; and which are the natural symptoms of uncertain and undetermined thought. What sort of

a thing can that be? What is that like? are the questions which, upon such an occasion, we are all naturally disposed to ask. If we can recollect many such objects, which exactly resemble this new appearance, and which present themselves to the imagination *naturally*, and, as it were, of their *own accord*, our wonder is entirely at an end. If we can recollect but a few, and which it requires, too, some trouble to be able to call up, our wonder is, indeed, diminished, but not quite *destroyed*. If we can recollect *none*, but are *quite at a loss*, it is the *greatest possible*." *

Even from this very description which Dr Smith has given us,—a description which seems to be, in its chief circumstance, a very faithful *picture* of the *phenomena of wonder*,—it might be collected, that wonder, *as a mere emotion*, independently of the trains of thought that may mingle with it, does not differ essentially from *surprise;* and so completely does he forget the distinction, laid down by himself, which would confine *wonder* and *surprise* to distinct objects, that he afterwards speaks of them *both* as produced by the *same object*, remarking, that when one accustomed object appears after another, which it does not usually follow, it first excites, by its unexpectedness, the sentiment properly called *surprise*, and afterwards, by the singularity of the succession, or order of its appearance, the sentiment properly called *wonder*. "We start, and are surprised at seeing it there, and then wonder how it

* Essay, &c. page 12.

came there;"* that is to say, if I may attempt the analysis, according to the view which I have given you, of the complex state, or states of mind described,—we are first surprised at the appearance of the unaccustomed object,—we are desirous of knowing what circumstances have led to the appearance,—and, by the various relations which the circumstances perceived bear to other circumstances that may have been present unobserved, and the consequent *operation* of the laws of suggestion, not *one* object only occurs, as a cause in which we might immediately acquiesce, but *various possible causes* arise to the mind, in judging of which we pass rapidly from one probability to another, and are lost and perplexed with a sort of anxious irresolution. The application of *both* terms to the emotions excited by *one object*, in our peculiar situation, is, however, as I have before remarked, a sufficient proof that Dr Smith had either forgotten his original distinction of wonder and surprise, or had seen that the distinction, precise and apposite as it appears at first, involves truly no specific difference of the *astonishment* itself, but merely of the *circumstances* which *precede* or *attend* it.

The defective analysis, however, on which the distinction of the *mere emotion* appears to me to be founded,—if I may venture to term it defective,—is an error of much less consequence than another error of Dr Smith with respect to surprise,—and all

* Page 17.

error which seems rather incongruous with his former speculation, as to the supposed difference which we have been now considering. Surprise, he thinks to be nothing more than the *sudden changes* of feelings which are commonly regarded, and, I conceive, truly regarded, as only the *circumstances* which *give occasion to the surprise*, not the *surprise itself*. "Surprise," he says, "is not to be regarded as an original emotion, of a species *distinct from* all others. The violent and sudden change produced upon the mind, when an emotion of any kind is brought suddenly upon it, constitutes the *whole nature of surprise*."* Now, if there be any emotion which is truly *original*, it really seems to me very difficult to discover one, which could have a better claim to this distinction, than surprise. It certainly is not involved in either of the successive *perceptions*, or *conceptions*, or *feelings of any kind*, the unusual successions of which, appear to us surprising; and, if it be not even in the slightest degree *involved*, in *either of them separately*, it cannot be involved in the *two*, which contain nothing more, as successive, than they contained *separately*. When the *two* are regarded by the *mind* as *objects*, indeed, they may *give rise* to *feelings* which are not *involved in themselves*, and the emotion of surprise may be, or rather truly is, one of these secondary feelings; but the surprise *is* then an *original emotion*, distinct from the primary states of mind which gave rise to it, indeed, but do not constitute it. *Sudden joy*, and

* Page 6.

sudden sorrow, even in their most violent extremes, might succeed each other, reciprocally, in endless succession, without exciting surprise, if the mind had been unsusceptible of *any other feelings* than *joy* and *sorrow*. Surprise is evidently not joy,—it is as evidently not sorrow,—nor is it a combination of joy and sorrow,—it is surely, therefore, something different from both; and we may say with confidence, that before the mind can be astonished at the succession of the two feelings, it *must* have been rendered susceptible, at least, of a *third feeling*.

The error of Dr Smith, in this case, is precisely the same as that fundamental error which we before traced in the system of Condillac and the other French metaphysicians,—the error of supposing that a feeling, which is the *consequence* of certain other previous feelings, is only *another form* of those *very feelings themselves*. Joy and sorrow, as mere states or affections of the mind, are as truly different from that state or affection of mind, which we term *surprise*, that may arise from the rapid succession of the two former states, as the fragrance of a rose, the bitterness of wormwood, or any other of our mere sensations, differs from those emotions of gratitude or revenge, into which these, or similar mere sensations, are, according to the very strange doctrine of Condillac, *transformed*,—though, as we found, in examining that system, which assumes without any proof, what it would certainly not have been very easy to prove,—all which constitutes the supposed transformation, is the mere priority of one set of feelings and subsequence, in time, of another.

Surprise, in like manner, is not, as Dr Smith contends, a mere rapid change of feelings, but is a *new* feeling, to which that rapid change gives rise,—a state of mind, as clearly distinguishable from the primary feelings, that may have given occasion to it, as gratitude is distinguishable from the mere memory of kindness received,—or revenge, as an emotion from that mere feeling of injury received, which attends it, indeed, for ever in the mind of the vindictive, but *preceded* the first desire of vengeance that was kindled by the thought.

The importance of our susceptibility of this emotion of surprise at things unexpected, as a part of our mental constitution, is very obvious. It is in *new circumstances* that it is most necessary for us *to be upon our guard;* because, from their novelty, we cannot be aware of the effects that attend them, and require, therefore, more than usual caution, where foresight is impossible. But, if new circumstances had not produced feelings peculiarly vivid, little regard might have been paid to them, and the evil, therefore, might have been suffered, before alarm was felt. Against this danger nature has *most* providentially guarded us. We cannot feel surprise, without a more than ordinary interest in the objects which may have excited this emotion, and a consequent tendency to pause, till their properties have become, in some degree, known to us. Our *astonishment* may thus be considered as a voice from that Almighty Goodness, which constantly protects us, that, in circumstances, in which inattention might be perilous, whispers, or almost cries to us, Beware!

Of a kind very different from *astonishment*, which implies unexpected *novelty*, is the emotion of weary and languid uneasiness, which we feel from the long continuance of *one unvaried* object, or from a succession of objects so nearly similar, as *scarcely* to appear varied. Even objects that originally excited the highest interest, if long continued, cease to interest, and soon become *painful*. Who, that is not absolutely deaf, could sit for a whole day in a music-room, if the same air, without any variation, were begun again in the very instant of its last note? The most beautiful couplet of the most beautiful poem, if repeated to us without intermission, for a very few minutes, would excite more uneasiness than could have been felt from a single recitation of the dullest stanza of the most soporific inditer of rhymes. By a little wider extension of this principle, we may perceive, how the very excellence of a work of genius often operates against it, in the later estimation which we form of it. What is *intrinsically excellent*, may, indeed, admit of being *frequently perused*, without any *diminution*, or, perhaps, even with *increase* of pleasure,—a circumstance which has been assigned as the distinguishing mark of excellence in works of this sort. But there are *limits* to this susceptibility of *repeated perusal with delight*; and, if a work be *very excellent*,—especially if the work be comprised in small compass,—we are in great danger of passing these limits, till it become too familiar to us to give us any direct pleasure; and, if it were not for our remembrance of the pleasure which we formerly received, we might be led to think it incapable of

giving us very high delight, merely because it has given us *so much* delight, as to have wearied us with the too frequent voluntary repetition of it.

What works of genius *gain* with the multitude by *extensive* diffusion of the admiration which they excite when very popular, they thus often *lose*, in its *intensity*, as a permanent feeling of individuals. How weary are we of many of the lines of our best poets, which are quoted to us *for ever*, by those who *read* only what *others quote;* and the same remark may be made as to those longer passages, or whole pieces, which are collected in the volumes of so many publishers of *beauties*, as they term them, who see only the beauties which *others* have seen, and extract, therefore, and collect only what their compiling predecessors have extracted and collected —presenting to us, very nearly the same volumes, with little more than the difference of the order of the pages. What we admired when we read it first, fatigues and disappoints us when we meet with it so often; and the author appears to us almost trite and common, in his most original images, merely because these images are so very beautiful, as to have become some of the common-places of *rhetorical* selection. He gains, indeed, by this *ubiquity*, many admirers, whom he otherwise would not have found; but he loses probably more than he gains, by the diminished pleasure which he affords to the few whose approbation is far more than equal in value to the homage of a multitude of dull admirers.

In travelling over a flat country, amid unvaried sce-

nery, how weary does the mind become! and what refreshment would a single *eminence* give, that might shew us, at a distance, rivers, and woods, and villages, and lakes, or perhaps the ocean, still more remote; or at least something more than a few hedge-rows, which, if they shew us any thing, seem to shew us constantly *the same meadow* which they have been shewing us for miles before. Notwithstanding our certainty, that a road, without one turn, *must* lead us sooner to our journey's end, it would be to our mind, and thus indirectly to our body also, which is soon weary when the mind is weary, the most fatiguing of all roads. A *very long avenue* is sufficiently wearying, even when we see the house which is at the end of it. But what patience could travel for a whole day, along one endless avenue, with perfect parallelism of the two straight lines, and with trees of the same *species* and *height*, succeeding each other *exactly at the same intervals*? In a journey like this, there would be the same comfort in being *blind*, as there would be in a little temporary deafness, in the case before imagined, of the same unvaried melody endlessly repeated in a music-room.

I need not, however, seek any additional illustrations of a fact, which, I may take for granted, is sufficiently familiar to you all, without any illustration. You cannot fail to have been subject to the influence of which I speak, in some one or other of its forms; and may remember that *weariness of mind*, which you would gladly have exchanged for *weariness of body*; and which it is perhaps more difficult to *bear*

with *good humour*, than many profound griefs;—because it involves, not merely the uneasiness of the uniformity itself, but the greater uneasiness of hope, that is renewed every moment, to be every moment disappointed. The change, which we know *must* come, *seems yet never to come.* In the case of the supposed journey of a day along one continued avenue, there can be no doubt, that the uniformity of similar trees, at similar distances, would itself be most wearisome. But what we should feel, with far more *fretfulness*, would be the constant disappointment of our expectation, that the last tree, which we beheld in the distance, would be the last that was to rise upon us;—when, tree after tree, as if in mockery of our very patience itself, would still continue to present the same dismal *continuity of line.*

The great utility of this uneasiness, that arises from the uniformity of impressions, which may even have been originally pleasing, it is surely superfluous for me to point out. Man is formed, not for rest, but for action; and if there were no weariness on a repetition of the past, the most general of all motives to action would be instantly suspended. We *act*, that is to say, we perform what is *new*, because we are desirous of some result, which is new; and we are desirous of the *new*, because the *old*, which itself was *once new*, presents to us no longer the same delight. If the *old* appeared to us, as it once appeared to us, we should rest in it with most indolent content.

"Hope, eager Hope, the assassin of our joy,
All present blessings treading under foot,
Is scarce a milder tyrant than Despair.
Possession, why more tasteless than pursuit?
Why is a wish far dearer, than a crown? *

It is not because Hope *treads* our present blessings under foot, that they seem to us to have lost their brightness, but, in a great measure, because they already seem to us to have faded, that we yield to the illusions of that Hope, which promises us, continually some blessing *more* bright and *less perishable*,—from the enjoyment of which it is afterwards to seduce us with a similar deceit.

The diminished pleasure, however, fading into positive uneasiness, which thus arises from uniformity of the past, answers, as we have seen, the most benevolent of purposes. It is to our *mind*, what the corresponding pain of *hunger* is to our *bodily health*. It gives an additional excitement, even to the *active*; and to far the greater number of mankind, it is, perhaps, the only excitement which could rouse them, from the sloth of ease, to those exertions, by which their intellectual and moral powers are, in some degree at least, more invigorated,—or by which, notwithstanding all their indifference to the welfare of others, they are *forced* to become the unintentional benefactors of that society, to which otherwise they might not have given the labours of a single bodily exertion, or even of a single thought.

* Night Thoughts, VII. v. 107—109, and 112, 113.

After these remarks on two of our very common emotions, I proceed to that which is next in the order of our arrangement.

"And lo! disclosed in all her smiling pomp,
Where Beauty, onward moving, claims the praise
Her charms inspire.—O, source of all delight,*
O thou, that kindlest, in each human breast,
Love, and the wish of poets, when their tongue
Would teach to other bosoms what so charms
Their own!—Thee, form divine! thee, Beauty, thee,
The regal dome, and thy enlivening ray,
The mossy roofs adore:—thou, better Sun!
For ever beamest on the enchanted heart,
Love, and harmonious wonder, and delight
Poetic!—Brightest progeny of Heaven!
How shall I trace thy features! where select
The roseate hues to emulate thy bloom!"†

The emotions of beauty, and the feelings opposed to those of beauty, to which I now proceed, are, next to our moral emotions, the most interesting of the whole class. They are emotions, indeed, which, in their effects, either of vice or virtue, may almost be considered as *moral*,—being mingled, if not with our own moral actions, at least in our contemplation of the moral actions of others, which we cannot admire, without making them, in some measure, our own, by that desire of imitating them, which, in such a case, it is scarcely possible for us not to feel,—or

* "O, Beauty, source of praise."—*Orig.*

† Pleasures of Imagination, B. I. v. 271—3. Second form of the poem, v. 282, 284—7, (from "O, source," to "Their own!") First form of the poem, v. 275,—282.

which, in like manner, we cannot view with disgust and abhorrence, without some strengthening in ourselves of the virtues, that are opposite to the vices which we consider.

Delightful as our emotions of beauty are,—important as they are, in their indirect effects,—and universally as they are felt, there is, perhaps, no class of feelings, in treating which so little precision has been employed by philosophers, and on which so little certainty has been attained. It is a very striking, though a quaint remark, of an old French writer, La Chambre, in his Treatise on the Characters of the Passions, that beauty has had a sort of *double* effect, in depriving men of their reason. "The greatest men," says he, "who have felt its effects, have been ignorant of its cause,—and we may say, that it has made them lose their reason, both when they have been touched with the charms of it, and when they have attempted to say anything about that very charm which they felt."

So many, indeed, have been the opinions of philosophers, on this subject,—and opinions so very confused, and so very contradictory, that I conceive it *safest*, to proceed at once to the consideration of the subject itself, without attempting to give you any previous view of the opinions of others with respect to it. I am quite sure, that, if these opinions were exhibited to you in succession, your powers of inquiry would be distracted and oppressed, rather than enlightened or invigorated, and, therefore, would not be in a state very well fitted for prosecuting the investigation, on which you might be called to enter.

In questions which relate to objects that cannot be directly submitted to the senses, and that have been thus perplexed by many opposite doctrines and speculations, it is often necessary to endeavour to forget as much as possible what others have thought, and to strive to think as if the opinions of others had been unknown to us. I know no question, in which this temporary forgetfulness could be of more profit than in that on which we are to enter.

When we speak of the emotion which beauty excites, we speak necessarily of an emotion that is *pleasing*; for it is only in the case of pleasing emotions that all writers concur in using the name, and only in such cases that the name is used, even by the vulgar, in their common phraseology. It is, in truth, only one of the many forms of that joyous delight, which I ranked as one of the elementary feelings to which our emotions are reducible. The pleasure, then, I may remark, in the first place, is one essential circumstance of the emotion.

Another circumstance, which may not seem so obvious, but which I consider as not less constituent of beauty, in that maturer state of the mind, in which alone we are capable of considering it, is that we transfer, in part, at least, the delight which we feel, and embody it in the object which excited it, whatever that object may have been, combining it at least partially with our very *conception* of the object, as beautiful,—much in the same way as we invest external forms, with the *colours* which exist as feelings of our own mind, or in our vague conception, and of the sapid or odoriferous substances, that are gratifying

to our luxury, we consider as almost present in them, and permanent some part of the very delight which they afford. I know well, that, philosophically, we consider these sapid and odoriferous substances, merely as the unknown *causes* of our sensations of sweetness and fragrance; but I have little doubt, at the same time, that it is *only philosophically* we do so consider them, and that, *while we smell a rose*, without thinking of our philosophy, we do truly consider the fragrance, which we are at the moment enjoying, or at least a charm which involves a sort of shadowy resemblance of that peculiar species of delight, to be floating around that beautiful flower, as if existing there, independently of our feeling. We do not, indeed, think of the *sensation* of fragrance as existing without, for if we characterized it as a *sensation*, this very judgment would imply a sort of philosophizing on its nature, which is far from taking place in such a moment. But, without regarding it as a sensation, and enjoying merely the actual feeling of the moment, we incorporate the charm, as it were, with the colours of the rose, with as little intention of forming this combination, and even with as little consciousness that any such combination is taking place, as when, in vision, we invest the external hardness,—the mere feeling of gentle and limited resistance, which the rosebud gives us as an object of touch, or of muscular compression, with the colours, which are at the moment arising from affections of a different organ. In the case of *fragrance*, it is more easy for us, indeed, to *separate* the sensation from the external form with which we combine it,—and to imagine a

rose without *odour*, than, in the case of *vision*, to separate the mere *form* and *hue* that mingle as if in one sensation, because there are many objects which we touch, that excite in us no sensations of fragrance; and no objects of touch which do not excite in us some sensations of colour. The coexistence is, therefore, more uniform, and the subsequent suggestions consequently more uniform and indissoluble in the *one case*, than in the other. It is much easier for us, accordingly, to persuade those who have never read, or discoursed, or thought, on such subjects, that the feelings of *smell* and *taste* are not *inherent* in their *objects*, than to persuade them that the actual *colours*, which form their sensations of vision, are not spread over the surfaces of external things. But the actual investment of *external things*, with the *feelings of our own mind, does* take place in our sensitive references to objects without; and, in some cases, as in those of vision, constitutes a union so close, that it is impossible even for our philosophy to break the union *while the sensation continues*. We know well, when we open our eyes, that whatever affects our eyes, is within the small compass of their orbit; and yet we cannot look for a single moment, without spreading what we thus visually feel over whole miles of landscape.

Still, I must repeat, not the slightest doubt is *philosophically* entertained by those, who, when they open their eyes, yield like the vulgar to the temporary allusion—that the colours, thus supposed to be spread over the external scenery, are truly *feelings of the mind*, of which the external objects, or rather

the rays of light that come from them, are merely the *unknown causes*. When questioned on the subject of vision, we state this opinion with confidence, and even with astonishment, that our opinion on the subject, in the present age of philosophy, should be doubted by him who has taken the superfluous trouble of putting such a question. At the very moment, probably, at which we give our answer, we have our eyes fixed on *him*, to whom we address it. His *complexion*, his *dress*, are regarded by us as external *colours*, and we are practically, at the very moment, therefore, belying the very opinion, which we profess, and in speculation *truly* profess, to hold.

These remarks shew sufficiently the distinction of our speculative limitation of our *feelings* to *mind*, as the only *subject of feeling*, and our practical diffusion of these very feelings over matter, which, by its nature, is incapable of being the subject of any feeling; and they shew, that it is very *possible* for the same mind to *combine both*, or rather, that there is no individual, who has accurately made the distinction, that does not, in almost every moment of his life,—and certainly in every moment of vision,—go through that very process of spiritualizing matter, or of diffusing over matter his own sensations, which, in his speculations, appears to him to involve an absolute contradiction.

It is not enough, therefore, to urge, in disproof of any diffusion of our mental feelings over material things, that our feelings are affections of mind, and cannot be affections of matter; since this would be

to disprove a fact, which, certainly in vision, and, as I conceive, in some degree in our other senses also, is continually taking place, notwithstanding the supposed demonstration of its impossibility.

To apply these remarks, however, to our particular subject.—Beauty, I have said, is necessarily an emotion that is pleasing, and it is an emotion which we diffuse, and combine with our conception of the object that may have excited it. These two circumstances, the pleasing nature of the emotion itself, and the identification of it with the object that excites it, are essential to it, in those years in which alone it can be an object of reflection; and are, as I conceive, the only circumstances that are essential to it, in all its varieties, and in whatever way the emotion itself may be produced. It is true, indeed, that when questioned, precisely as in the case of simple vision, whether we think that the emotion of beauty is a state or affection of matter, we should have no hesitation, in affirming instantly, that it is a state of the mind, and is absolutely incapable of existing in any substance, that is purely *material*. All this we should say with confidence, as we say with confidence that colour is an affection of the mind, and only an affection of the mind. Yet still, as in the case of colour, the temporary diffusion of our own feeling over the external objects, would take place as before. The beauty as truly felt, and as reasoned upon, would be in our mind; the beauty, as considered by us *at the time of the feeling*, would be a delight that seemed to *float* over the object without—the object which we, therefore, term

beautiful, as we term certain other objects red or green—not the mere unknown causes of the feelings which we term redness, or greenness, or beauty,—but objects that are red, and green, and beautiful. Even at the time of the diffusion, however, we do not say, or even think, that we diffuse the *emotion* of beauty any more than we say or think that we diffuse the *sensations* of colour; for this, as I have said, would be to have philosophized on the *nature* of the *feelings* or *states* of a *substantial mind;* but without any thought of the *colours* as *sensations,* or of the *beauty* as an *emotion,* we feel them as in the objects that excite them, that is to say, we reflect them from ourselves on the objects. The diffusion may be temporary, indeed, and depend on the actual presence of the object, but still the temporary diffusion does take place; and while the object is before us, it is as little possible for us not to regard it, as permanently beautiful, though no eye were ever to behold it, as it would be for us to regard its colour, as fading the very moment in which we close our eye. Beauty, then, is a pleasing emotion, and a delight which we feel, as if diffused over the object which excites it.

I shall proceed further in my inquiry in my next Lecture.

LECTURE LIV.

OF IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS, NOT NECESSARILY INVOLVING ANY MORAL FEELING.—3. BEAUTY AND ITS OPPOSITE, CONTINUED.

GENTLEMEN, the latter part of my Lecture, yesterday, was employed in considering one of the most interesting of our emotions,—that which constitutes the charm of Beauty,—an emotion, which every one must have felt sufficiently, to understand, at the mere mention of the name, what it *is*, which is the subject of inquiry, and which, notwithstanding, when we endeavour to explain to others what we feel, no two individuals probably would define by the same terms.

Of an emotion, which is so delightful, and so universal, and, by a singular, and almost contradictory character of thought, at once so clearly *felt*, and so obscurely *comprehended*, many theories, as might well be supposed, have been formed by philosophers. If the accurate knowledge of a subject bare any necessary proportion, to the *number of opinions* with respect to it, that have been stated and canvassed, and the labour and ability of those who have ad-

vanced their own theories, or examined the theories of others, there could now be scarcely any more doubt, as to the nature of what is beautiful, than as to any property of a circle or a triangle, which geometricians have demonstrated.

Such a proportion, however, unfortunately, does not hold. There are subjects, which as little grow clearer, by a comparison of many opinions with respect to them, as the waters of a turbid lake grow clearer, by being frequently dashed together, when all that can be effected, by the agitation, is to *darken* them the more.

In such a case, the plan most prudent, is to let the waters *rest*, before we attempt to discover what is at the bottom,—or, to speak without a metaphor, where there is so much confusion and perplexity, from opposite opinions, it is often of great advantage, to regard the subject, if we can so regard it, without reference to any former opinion whatever,—as if the phenomena were wholly *new*, or ourselves the *first* inquirers.

This I in part attempted, in my last Lecture,—the results of which it may be of advantage briefly to recapitulate.

Though we use the general name of *Beauty*, in cases in which there is a great *variety* of the objects that excite it, and a very *considerable* variety also in the *emotion itself*, which is thus excited,—the emotion, to which we give the name, in all its varieties, is uniformly *pleasing*. This, then, is one essential circumstance of the emotion of beauty,—or,

to speak more accurately, of the tribe of different, though kindred emotions, which, from their analogy, we comprehend under that general name.

Another circumstance, which distinguishes the emotion of beauty, in all its varieties, from many other emotions, that are pleasing in themselves, is, that, by a sort of reflex transfer to the object which excited it, we identify or combine our agreeable feeling with our very *conception* of the object, whether present or absent from us. Whatever is delightful, at the moment in which we gaze or listen with delight, seems to us to be *contained* in the beautiful object, as the charms which were contained in that fabulous Cestus described by Homer, that existed when none beheld them, and were the *same*, whether the Cestus itself was worn by *Venus*, or by *Juno*.

In illustration of this embodying, or *reflecting process*, the result of which seems to me to be that which *constitutes an object to our conception as beautiful*, it was necessary to offer some remarks, and especially to make some *distinctions*, without which, the supposition of this *transfer* of our delight, and *diffusion* of it, in the conception of the object that gave birth to it, might appear to involve a sort of absurdity; as if it implied, in the same object, a combination of *material* and *mental* affections, which are incapable of union.

It is particularly of importance, in this case, to distinguish our *momentary sentiments* from our *philosophical judgments*. As I behold the sun, for example, it is impossible for me to regard it but as a

plane circular surface of a few inches diameter. As I regard it philosophically, it is a sphere of such magnitude, as almost to pass the limits of my conception. If I were asked, what is the diameter of the sun? I should endeavour to state it, with as exact an approximation to its real magnitude as was possible for me. But if I were to state what every one *feels*, who knows nothing of astronomy, and what even the astronomer *feels* as much as the vulgar, when he turns his eye to that great luminary, I should say, that the diameter was scarcely a foot; —*so* different is our momentary sentiment, *while we gaze*, from the judgments which we form philosophically, after we have ceased to gaze;—the impression of the momentary sentiment, too, it must be remembered, being *as irresistible* as that of the *judgment*, or rather the *more* irresistible of the two. In like manner, when I look at any distant landscape, first with my naked eye, afterwards with a telescope, held in one direction, and then with the same telescope *inverted*, I have a most undoubting belief, that the objects, thus seen in three different ways, have continued exactly at the same distance from me; but, if I were to state what *I feel visually*, and what, with all my knowledge of the optical deception, it is impossible for me *not to feel visually*, I should say, in each of these ways of viewing the scene, that the objects were at *very different distances*. To recur, however, to that instance, which brings the difference of the philosophical and the momentary belief nearest to that which takes

place in the *feeling of beauty*—the case of the visual perceptions of colour—it is well known, to every one who is acquainted with the theory of the secondary or acquired perceptions of sight, that the colours, which seem to us *spread* over that wide surface of landscape, which terminates in the remote horizon, are *spiritual*, not *corporeal* modifications—the effect, indeed, of the presence of a few rays within the small orbit of the eye, but an *effect* only, not a *part*, of the radiance; and that we yet *diffuse, as it were*, the *colour*, which exists but as a sensation of our mind, over those distant objects, which are not *mind*, but *matter*. If we were asked, what the *material colour* is, we should state, *philosophically*, that it is the *unknown* cause of that *colour which is our sensation*,—that *redness*, for example, is a feeling of our own mind, and *greenness* a *feeling of our own mind*, and that what are truly *redness* and *greenness* in the *external objects*, being both *equally* unknown to us in themselves, have no other difference in our conception than as being the unknown *causes of different mental feelings*. This answer we should give *philosophically;* but, at the same time, it would be impossible for us to look on these *unknown causes of our sensations of colour*, without *blending* with them the very sensations which they cause, and seeing, therefore, in *them the very greenness and redness* which are *feelings of our own mind*. In like manner, when we philosophize on *beauty*, and separate the delight which is *in us* from the *cause of the delight* which is *without us*, beauty is simply that which *excites in us a certain*

delightful feeling; it is like the *greenness or redness of objects*, considered separately from our *perception of objects*,—the *greenness* and *redness*, which material objects would have, though *no mind sentient of colour were in existence*. But, still *this* is not the beauty which we *feel*; it is only the *beauty* which we strive in vain to *conceive*. The external beauty *which we feel*, involves our very delight reflected on it, and diffused, as much as, in the case of a visual object, it involves our *sensations of colour diffused in it*; the *colour*, which we reflect, being, in our *mind*, as the *charm* which we reflect, is *also in our mind*. In this sense, indeed, that ancient theory of beauty, which refers it to mind as its source, *is* a faithful statement of the phenomenon; since it is our own spiritual delight which we are continually spreading around us,—though, in the sense in which Plato and his followers intended their reference to be understood, it is far from being just, or, at least, far from having been proved to be just. In borrowing, therefore, the language which they use, we do not borrow a mere poetic rhapsody; but it becomes, with the interpretation which I would give it, the expression of a philosophic truth.

> "Mind, mind alone—Bear witness, earth and heaven!—
> The living fountains in itself contains
> Of beauteous and sublime!—Here, hand in hand,
> Sit paramount the Graces;—here, enthroned,
> Celestial Venus, with divinest airs,
> Invites the soul to never-fading joy." *

* Pleasures of Imagination, Book I. v. 481—486.

It is the mind, indeed, alone, that, in the view which I have given you, is the living fountain of beauty, because it is the mind, which, by reflection from itself, embodies in the object, or spreads over it its own delight. If no *eye*, that is to say, if no *mind*, were to behold it, what would be the loveliest of those forms, on which we now gaze with rapture, and more than rapture? *A multitude of particles more or less near or remote.* It is the *soul* in which these particles, directly or indirectly, excite agreeable feelings, which invests them in return with many seeming qualities that cannot belong to the mere elementary atoms which nature herself has made; which gives them, in the first place, that unity as a single form, which they do not possess of themselves, since, of themselves, however near they may be in seeming cohesion, they are a multitude of separate and independent corpuscles,—which, at the same time, spreads over them the *colours*, that are more truly the *effect* of our vision than the *cause* of it,—and which diffuses among them still more intimately those charms and graces, which they possess only while we gaze, and without which, when the eyes that animate and embellish them are closed, they are again only a multitude of separate particles, more or less near or remote.

Another distinction, to which I alluded, in my last Lecture, and which, though *apparently*, and even *really* a *verbal one*, is a distinction of great *importance*, in its influence on our assent,—is the difference of the phrases, *colour*, and *sensation of colour*,—*beauty*, and *emotion of beauty*. When we

speak of *colour* or *beauty* simply, we speak of what we *feel*, without considering anything more than the *feeling itself*. When we speak of the *sensation* of colour, and of the *emotion* of beauty, we speak of *those feelings*, with *reference to the mind*; and, though colour, as felt by us, must of course be the *sensation of colour*, and beauty, as felt by us, be the *emotion of beauty*, it appears to us a very different proposition, to state, that, in vision, we combine our *sensation* of colour with external things, or our *emotion* of beauty with external things, and to say simply that we combine with them colour and beauty. We combine them, without knowing that we are combining them, consequently without thinking that the *one* is a sensation, the other an emotion, and both *affections of mind alone*. To think of them as *a sensation and emotion*, would be to have formed already the philosophic judgment, which separates them from the object, not the mere *momentary sentiment*, which combines them with it. In the case of *vision*, there can be no doubt, that this is done, every moment, by the lowest of the people, who have not the slightest suspicion that the *colour*, or rather the cause of colour, as it exists without, is *different* from that *redness or blueness*, which they think they see *spread over the surface of objects*; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that, in combining, in our notion of the beautiful object, the delightful feeling of our mind, we should do this, with as little suspicion, that the delight, which we have diffused over the object itself, is our own internal emotion.

That, in thinking of a beautiful object, we do

consider some permanent delight as diffused, and, as it were, embodied in it, is, I think, evident, on the slightest reflection on the objects which we term beautiful. And yet, when we first think of this diffusion of a mental feeling over a material object,—if we have not been in the habit of attending to other phenomena of the mind,—the very supposition of such a process may seem to involve an assumption, that is scarcely warrantable; precisely as the uneducated multitude,—and, perhaps, a very great majority of the smaller multitude, who *are* educated, would smile, with something more than unbelief, if we were to endeavour to make them acquainted with that part of the theory of vision, which relates to colour. But, to those who have been in the habit of considering the mental phenomena in general, and particularly the phenomena commonly ascribed to association,—the diffusion of this feeling, and combination of it with our notion of the cause of the feeling, will seem only an instance of a very general law of our mental constitution. It is, indeed, only an instance of that general tendency to condensation of feelings, which gives the principal value to every object that is familiar to us,—to the home of our infancy,—to the walks of our youth,—to every gift of friendship,—nor only to these inanimate things, but, in a great measure also, to the living objects of our affection,—to those who watched over our infant slumbers, or who were the partners of our youthful walks,—or who left with us, in absence, or in death, those *sacred gifts*, which for a moment supply their place, with that brief illusion of reality, which gives to our remembrance *a more delightful sadness*.—

When we look to the grey hairs of him, in the serenity of whose parental eye, even in its most serious contemplation, there is a silent smile that is ever ready to shine upon us,

> "Whose authority, in show,
> When most severe, and mustering all its force,
> Was but the graver countenance of Love;
> Whose favour, like the clouds of spring might lour,
> And utter now and then an awful voice,
> But had a blessing in its darkest frown:"*—

When we look to that gracious form, in whose thought, even in the moments in which he addresses to Heaven his gratitude or his prayer, *we* are still present, as he thinks of that *common home of our immortality*, to which he is only journeying before us,—or commends us to the protection of that great Being who has been, in his own long earthly career, the protection and happiness of his youth and his age,—are there no feelings of our heart, no enjoyments of *early fondness* and *increasing gratitude*, and *reverence unmixed with fear*, which we have combined with the very *glance* of that *eye*, and the very tone of that voice, whose glance and tone are to us almost like a blessing? The friend whom we have long loved, is, at each single moment, what he has been to us in many successive years. Without recalling to us the particular events of these years, he recalls to us their delights; or rather the very notion which we form of him contains in itself this diffused pleasure, like some etherial and immortal spirit of the past.

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* Cowper's Task, Book VI. v. 30—35.

Nor, as I have already said, is it only in our moral affection, for beings *living like ourselves*, and capable, therefore, of *feeling* and returning our *kindness*, that this condensation of regard takes place. It produces an affection of almost moral sympathy, when there can be no *feeling* of it, and, therefore, no *possibility of return*; and where that softening influence, accordingly, *must* be wholly reflected from our own mind. That, for inanimate objects, long familiar to us, we have a regard, in some degree, similar to that which we feel for a *friend*, has been the remark of all ages; since every individual, in every age, must have been subject to the universal influence, which gives occasion to it. A little attention to this process, by which an object, of trifling value, becomes *representative* of *feelings* that are *inestimable*, will not be uninteresting in itself, and will throw much light on that similar process, by which, in the case of beauty, I conceive objects to become representative, by a sort of spiritual reflection, of the pleasure which they excite. I cannot prepare you better for this discussion, than by quoting some remarks from the eloquent work of Dr Smith.

"The causes of pain and pleasure, whatever they are, or however they operate, seem to be the objects, which, in all animals, immediately excite those two passions of gratitude and resentment. They are excited by inanimate, as well as by animated objects. We are angry, for a moment, even at the stone that hurts us. A child beats it, a dog barks at it, a choleric man is apt to curse it. The least reflection, indeed, corrects this sentiment, and we soon become

sensible, that what has no feeling is a very improper object of revenge. When the mischief, however, is very great, the object which caused it becomes disagreeable to us ever after, and we take pleasure to burn or destroy it. We should treat, in this manner, the instrument which had accidentally been the cause of the death of a friend; and we should often think ourselves guilty of a sort of inhumanity, if we neglected to vent this absurd sort of vengeance upon it.

"We conceive, in the same manner, a sort of gratitude for those inanimate objects, which have been the causes of great or frequent pleasure to us. The sailor, who, as soon as he got ashore, should mend his fire with the plank upon which he had just escaped from a shipwreck, would seem to be guilty of an unnatural action. We should expect that he would rather preserve it with care and affection, as a monument that was, in some measure, dear to him. A man grows fond of a snuff-box, of a pen-knife, of a staff, which he has long made use of, and conceives something like a real love and affection for them. If he breaks or loses them, he is vexed out of all proportion to the value of the damage. The house which we have long lived in, the tree whose verdure and shade we have long enjoyed, are both looked upon with a sort of respect that seems due to such benefactors. The decay of the one, or the ruin of the other, affects us with a kind of melancholy, though we should sustain no loss by it. The Dryads and the Lares of the ancients, a sort of genii of trees and houses, were probably first suggested by this sort of affection, which the authors of those superstitions

felt for such objects, and which seemed unreasonable, if there was nothing animated about them."*

The reason of this friendship for inanimate objects, seems to me to be, that, with such objects, in the circumstances supposed, there is *really combined* a great part of that which forms the complex conception of our friend; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that there should be a *considerable similarity of the feeling excited.* There is not, indeed, and cannot be, in the case of *lifeless matter*, that admiration of virtue and genius,—that gratitude for a preference voluntarily made, and for kindness voluntarily shewn,—and that confidence in future displays of similar devotion,—which form so gratifying and ennobling a part of friendship. But what constitutes the real *tenderness* of friendship, is something more than all these feelings. *These* may be felt, in attachments that are formed at any period of life, and at a very early period of mutual acquaintance. But that, which gives to such a union its chief tenderness, is *long and cordial intimacy*, and especially that intimacy, which has taken its origin in an early period of life. The friend of our *boyish sports*—of our *college studies*—of our first *schemes;* and *successes*, and *joys*, and *sorrows*, is he, in whose converse the heart expands most readily, and with whom, in latest old age, we love *to grow young again.* With the very image of the *person*, is mingled the remembrance of innumerable enjoyments and consolations shared in common. They are, as it were, condensed and fixed in it, and are reflected

* Theory of Moral Sentiments, Part II. sect. iii. c. 1.

back upon us, as often as the image arises. But the remembrance of a long series of agreeable emotions may be mingled with *inanimate scenes*, as well as with *persons*; and if, by the reflection of these past emotions, it produce *tenderness*, in the *one* case, it surely is not surprising, that the *same cause* should produce a feeling of *tenderness*, in the other; and that, as the chief source of the affection is thus in circumstances that are common to both, we should feel something very like *regard* for every long familiar object, while it exists, and of grief, when it *exists no more*.

The old man, who pointed out the house of a deceased friend, and said, "formerly I had only to climb those steps, to forget all the miseries of life," must have felt for the *steps*, which he had so often trod, that regard, which arises from the remembrance of past delight,—a remembrance, which constituted so important a part of the pleasure formerly received by him, when they led him to the apartment of his friend, and to all that *happiness*, which was more than the mere forgetfulness of grief, even when there was grief, or the very miseries of life, to be forgotten.

The same effect, in heightening friendship, which is produced by long intimacy, is produced, in a great degree, by any single feeling of very vivid interest; such as that of *peril shared together*,—the strong emotion of the moment of enterprize,—the joy of the escape,—and, in many cases, the glory which attended it, being blended and reflected from each individual, as from another self. In one of those admirable tragedies, which form a part of the series of

plays on the Passions, there is a very striking picture of this kind, in the speech of an old maimed soldier, who, with all his modesty, has been forced to allude to some of his past exploits.

> " For I have fought, where *few alive* remain'd,
> And *none unscathed;* where but a few remain'd,
> Thus marr'd and mangled;—as belike you've seen,
> O' summer nights, around the evening lamp,
> Some wretched moths, wingless and half consumed,
> Just feebly crawling o'er their heaps of dead.
> In Savoy, on a small, though desperate post,
> Of full three hundred goodly chosen men,
> But twelve were left;—*and right dear friends were we*
> *For ever after.* They are all dead now;—
> I'm old and lonely."*

In a real case of this sort, every vivid feeling, which attended the action,—and the remembrance of *which* was, in a great measure, the remembrance of the *action* itself,—would be combined with the perception of each individual survivor. The common peril, the common escape, the common glory, would be conceived as *one;* and, in consequence of this unity, as often as the thought of the glorious action recurred, each would be to the others as it were another self. Indeed, so closely would the conception of the action itself, and of the right-dear friends be blended, that, in a case like that which the drama supposes, I have little doubt, that when all but one of the little band of heroes had perished, it would seem to the melancholy survivor,—when all the *real* component parts of the action had thus cea-

* Count Basil, a Tragedy, Act III. Scene 1.

sed to exist,—as if the happiness and glory of the action had perished likewise; and old age and loneliness would be felt the more, as if stripped, not of the enjoyments of friendship only, but almost of the very honours of other years.

The same feeling in this case, too, it must be remarked, extends itself, if not equally, at least in a very high degree, to *inanimate things;* and there can be no question, that the sword, which has been worn only as *an ornament*, and the sword which has been often wielded in battle, and in battle the most perilous, will be viewed by their possessors with very different regard. The weapon is itself a real component part of the glorious actions which it represents; and we transfuse, as it were, into the mere lifeless steel, a consciousness and reciprocity of our vivid feelings, exactly as, in the case of beauty, we animate the external object with our own delight, without knowing that we have done so.

The grief, which we feel for the loss of an object, insignificant in itself, and deriving all its value from associations formed with it, presents, in another form, that transfusion of feeling from the mind, and concentration of it in the object, which constitute our lively pictures of *beauty*, when it is regarded not as the *unknown cause* of our delightful feeling, but as that *embodied delight itself.*

An object, long familiar to us, by occurring frequently, either in perception, or in trains of thought, together with many of our most interesting emotions, and the images of those friends of whom we think most frequently, is, by the common laws of suggestion, so clearly associated with these emotions and

ideas, that, when *it* is present to our mind, *these* shadowy images of happiness may almost be considered as forming with it a part of one complex feeling, or at least, are very readily recalled by it. When such an object, therefore, is *lost*, and we think of it *as lost*, we do not conceive it as that *simple object of perception* which it was *originally*, when it first affected our senses,—in which case, the loss of it could not be very seriously regarded by us—but we conceive it, as that *complex whole*, which it has *become*—the image or representation of many delightful feelings. Though it be only a snuff-box, or a walking-stick, as in the cases supposed by Dr Smith, the mere circumstance of the loss, would of itself give some degree of additional interest to our conception of the object, which makes it dwell longer in our mind than it would otherwise have done, and allows time, therefore, for the recurrence of a greater number of the images associated with it, that rise accordingly, and mingle with the conception. But with that complex state of mind, which arises from the union of these, in our rapid retrospect of other years, —a state which is not the *mere conception* of the walking-stick which we have lost, but of *it* and the other associate feelings, the feeling of the *loss* is mingled, and is mingled, not more with the conception of the stick, than with all the co-existing associate feelings, vague and indistinct as these may be —the conception, perhaps, of the friend who presented it to us,—of the walks during which it has been our companion,—of many of the innumerable *events*, of joy or sorrow, that have occupied us, since

the time at which, like a new limb added to us, it became, as it were, a part of ourselves. Since the notion of the loss, therefore, is *combined* with *all these conceptions*, in our complex state of mind, it is not wonderful that it should appear to us, *for the moment*, as the loss, not of one part only, and that, if absolutely considered, the *least* important part of the whole, but as the actual loss of the associate group of images and emotions, of which it is more than representative, and that it should excite our momentary sorrow, accordingly, as for that actual loss. We know, indeed, whenever we *reflect*, that all these objects are *not* lost, but the *walking-stick only*, and our reason, every moment, checks us with this truth; but still, *every other moment*, in spite of reason, the feeling of the *loss* and the conception of the vague complex whole, continuing to be blended, affect our mind with the blended regret. It is only one of the innumerable instances, in which our feelings continue obstinately to delude us, in *spite of the knowledge* which might be supposed capable of saving us from the illusion, as, particularly in those striking cases of optical deception, to which, on account of the important light which they throw on the phenomena of the mind in general, I have already, so *frequently*, directed your attention. When we look at a painted cylinder, or at any landscape in which the laws of perspective are observed, we know well that it is a *flat surface* at which we are looking. Yet it is absolutely *impossible for us*, notwithstanding this knowledge, to consider the *cylinder* as a *plane*, and all the rocks, and groves, and

long-withdrawing vales of the landscape, as comprehended in a few inches of colouring. When we receive the portrait of a friend, it is vain for reason to tell us, that we have received only *a flat surface of a little paint*;—when we *lose a walking-stick*, the *gift of a friend*, it is equally vain for reason to tell us, that we have suffered only a loss which we can repair for a few shillings at a toyshop.

It is in a great measure, then, by the momentary belief of the loss of more than the object itself, that I would explain that disproportioned emotion, which is felt to be absurd, yet is not felt the less on account of this seeming absurdity.

But, whatever may be thought of this explanation of that grief,—so far beyond the absolute value of the object,—which we feel, on the loss of any object that has been long familiar to us, there at least can be no doubt, as to the *great fact itself*, that an object, long familiar to us, *does* acquire additional value, by this familiarity; and, as the object is *absolutely* the *same*, however frequently it may have met our eyes, or been used by us for any of the common purposes of life, it is only a *relative* value which it can have acquired, a *value* consisting in our *own feelings merely*, which we must therefore have condensed in it, or attached to it in some way or other.

After these illustrations from phenomena, that, if not absolutely of the same class, are, at least, very *closely analogous*,—since they imply a sort of charm conceived by us as *treasured* in external things, and a charm which consists merely in the *reflected feel-*

ings of our own mind, I trust it will not appear to you too bold an affirmation, to say, that the *agreeable emotions* which certain objects excite in us, are capable of being, in our conception, *combined* with the very notion of the *objects themselves,* and that we term such objects *beautiful,* by combining, in our notion of them, the *delight which we feel,* as we term them *green, blue, crimson,* by combining with them our *feelings of colour.* What is true, of objects of sight, may be conceived as easily, in every other species of beauty, *natural* or *artificial, material* or *mental.* Whatever excites the emotion, may be felt as of itself combined with the emotions which it excites,—*forms, colours, sounds,* all that is ingenious in art, or amiable in morals. My limits will not permit me to trace all the varieties of beauty with any minute investigation, through this variety of its objects; but you may yourselves equally apply to *them* whatever remarks I have applied, more particularly, to one species of the delightful emotion.

It is of *external* objects, indeed, and particularly of objects of *sight,* that we think most frequently, when we speak or hear of beauty; but this does not arise from any exclusive peculiarity of the feeling excited by these objects, as if the term were only metaphorically applied to others, but because external objects are continually around us, so as *more frequently* to excite the emotion of beauty; and in a great measure, too, because the human form, itself an object of vision, is representative to us of the presence of all which we love,—of those with whom

our life is connected, and from whom its happiness has been derived, or from whom we hope to derive it. It is not wonderful, therefore, that when we think of beauty, we should think of that by which the emotion is most vividly excited, and should be led accordingly to seek it there,—

> "Where Beauty's *living image*, like the morn
> That wakes in zephyr's arms the blushing May,
> Moves onward; or as Venus, when she stood
> Effulgent on the pearly car, and smil'd,
> Fresh from the deep, and, conscious of her form,
> To see the Tritons tune their vocal shells,
> And each cerulean sister of the flood,
> With loud acclaim, attend her o'er the waves,
> To seek th' Idalian bower." *

That we are susceptible of a similar delightful emotion from works *of intellect*, is sufficiently shewn by the *fine arts*, which are founded on this happy susceptibility; nor is the delight felt, *only on the contemplation of works of fancy*,—at least of *fancy* in the sense in which that term is commonly employed; it is felt, in the result of faculties, that seem, while exercised in the operations that produce the beautiful result, to be very foreign from every emotion, but that tranquil satisfaction which may be supposed to constitute a part of our *assent to any interesting truth*. How many *theorems* are there, to which a mathematician applies the term *beautiful*, as readily as it is applied by others to the design or the colouring of a *picture*, or to the *words* or *air*

* Pleasures of Imagination, B. I. v. 327—335.

of a song; and though the delightful emotion which he expresses by that word is at once far inferior in degree, and only analogous in kind to the emotion excited by those objects, it still is so analogous as to deserve the denomination. In general physics, in like manner, how instantly do we speak of the *beauty* of an *experiment*, which is so contrived as to decide a point that has been long in controversy, by very simple means, and with the exclusion of every foreign circumstance that might affect the accuracy of the result,—or of the beauty of a theory, which brings together many facts that were before dispersed, without any obvious bond of union, and exhibits them in luminous connexion to our view. The delightful emotion, in these intellectual forms of beauty, is, it will be admitted, far less lively, than when it results from external things. But when we thus apply the term *beautiful* to the works of faculties, that are not immediately conversant with beauty, or in which, at least, beauty is scarcely even a secondary consideration, we are far from using a *metaphor*, any more than we use a metaphor, when we employ the same word in speaking of the beauty of a landscape, and of the beauty of human form, which are both objects of sight, but of which the resulting emotions, though analogous, are far from being the same. We employ the term, because, from the analogy of the delight in the different cases, it is the only term which can express our meaning; we do truly feel, on the contemplation of such intellectual works, a delightful emotion,—as we feel a delightful emotion very similar, however superior it may

be in intensity of pleasure, when we look on the charms of nature, or the imitative creations of art; and, as we conceive the very *charm* which we *feel*, to be *diffused* and *stored* in those beautiful forms on which we gaze, so does the charm which we feel, seem, *for the moment*, to flow over the severest works of intellect, in the conceptions which are embodied to us. Even reason itself, austere as it may seem, is thus only a part of Beauty's universal empire, that extends over *mind*, and over *matter*, with equal sway.

But though by some minds, which have not been conversant with the beautiful results of scientific inquiry, these severe and less obvious charms may not be readily admitted,—of *moral* beauty, it is surely impossible for any one to doubt that charm, which is felt by us, even before we have learned to distinguish *virtue* by its *name*; and which, even to the guilty, who have abandoned it, still retains a sort of *dreadful loveliness*, which they would gladly forget, but which no effort can wholly banish from their remembrance, that is forced still to shudder and admire. It is the analogy of this *moral beauty*, indeed, which gives its most attractive charm to the beauty of the *inanimate universe*, and which adorns poetry with its most delightful images. To give our mere *approbation* to *virtue*, as we give our *assent* to any truth of reasoning, seems to be as little *possible*, as for those, who are not blind, to open their eyes, in the very sunshine of noon, on some delightful scene, and to view it as a *mere collection of forms* without any *colouring*. The softer moral perfections, so essential to

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the happiness, and almost to the very existence of society, are like those *mild lights*, and gentle graces, in the system of external things, without which the repose of nature would not be *tranquillity*, but *death*, and its *motions*, in the waving bough, and the foamy waterfall, and the stream that glides from it, would be only the agitation of contiguous particles of matter. Well, indeed, may the poet of imagination exclaim,—

> "Is aught so fair,
> In all the dewy landscapes of the spring,
> In the bright eye of Hesper or the morn,
> In nature's fairest forms, is aught *so* fair
> As virtuous friendship? as the candid blush
> Of him who strives with fortune to be just?
> The generous tear that streams for others' woes?
> Or the mild majesty of private life,
> When Peace, with ever-blooming olive, crowns
> The gate,—where Honour's liberal hands effuse
> Unenvied treasures, and the snowy wings
> Of Innocence and Love protect the scene?" *

In all these cases of *moral* beauty, as in that to which our senses more immediately give rise, we conceive the delight which we feel, to be *centered* in the *moral object;* and the very diffusion of the delight seems to connect us more closely with that which we admire,—producing what is not a mere sympathy, but something more intimate,—that *union of mind with mind*, in reflected and mingled feeling,—which, notwithstanding all the absurd

* Pleasures of Imagination, B. I. v. 500—511.

mysticism that has been written concerning it, has, in the manner which I have now described, in part at least, a foundation in nature.

But, though, in all these great provinces of beauty, the material, the intellectual, and the moral, an object which we feel to be *beautiful*, be merely an object, with which, in our conception, or continued perception, if it be an object of sense, or, in our mere conception, if it be an object of another kind, we have combined, by a sort of mental diffusion, the delight which it has excited in us; why, it will be said, do certain objects produce this effect?

The examination of this point, however, I must defer till my next Lecture.

LECTURE LV.

I. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS NOT INVOLVING NECESSARILY ANY MORAL FEELING.—III. BEAUTY, AND ITS REVERSE, CONTINUED.—DIFFERENT SORTS OF BEAUTY.

GENTLEMEN, my last Lecture was employed in considering and illustrating, by various analogous phenomena of the mind, the process by which I conceive our *feeling of delight*, that arises from the object which we term *beautiful*, to be *reflected*, as it were, from our mind to the objects which excite it, —very much in the same way as we spread over external things, in the common phenomena of vision, the *colour*, which is a *feeling* or state, not of matter, but of mind. A *beautiful object*, when considered by us *philosophically*, like the *unknown causes* of our sensations of *colour* in bodies, considered separately from our visual sensations, is merely *the cause of a certain delightful emotion* which we feel;—a *beautiful object*, as *felt by us*, when we do not attempt to make any philosophic distinction, is, like those *coloured objects* which we *see* around us, an object in which we have diffused the delightful feeling of our own mind. Though no eye were to behold what is beautiful, we cannot but imagine that a certain delight would for ever be *flowing around*

it,—as we cannot but imagine, in like manner, that the loveliest flower of the wilderness, which buds and withers unmarked, is blooming with the same delightful hues, which our vision would give to it, and surrounded with that sweetness of fragrance, which, in itself, is but a number of exhaled particles, that are *sweetness* only *in the sentient mind*.

An object, then, as felt by us to be beautiful, seems to *contain*, in its own nature, the very *delight* which it occasions. But a certain delight must in this case be *excited*, before it can be *diffused* by reflection on that object which is its cause; and it is *only by certain objects* that the delightful emotion *is* excited. *Why*, then, it will be said, is the effect so *limited?* and *what circumstances* distinguish the objects that produce the emotion, from those which produce no emotion whatever, or, perhaps, even an emotion that may be said to be *absolutely opposite?*

If the *same effect* were *uniformly* produced by the *same objects*, it might seem as absurd to inquire, how certain objects are *beautiful* and others not so, as to inquire, how it happens that *sugar* is not *bitter*, nor *wormwood sweet*,—the blossom of the *rose* not *green*, nor the common herbage of our meadows *red*. The question, however, assumes a very different appearance, when we consider the *diversity* of the emotions excited by the *same object*, and when we consider the very powerful influence of *accidental association* on our emotions of this kind. In such circumstances we may be fairly allowed to *doubt*, at least, whether objects, primarily and absolutely, have

a power of producing this emotion, or whether it may not *wholly* depend on those contingent circumstances, which we find, and must allow, to be capable of modifying it to *so very great an extent.*

That certain circumstances do truly *modify* our emotions of beauty, there can be no doubt;—and even that they *produce* the feeling, when there is every reason to believe, that, but for such circumstances, no emotion of the kind would have been excited. The influence of what is called *fashion*, in giving a temporary beauty to various forms, is a most striking proof of this *flexibility* of our emotion; and it is a fact too obvious to require illustration by example.

"If an European," says Sir J. Reynolds in one of his discourses delivered at the Royal Academy, "if an European, when he has cut off his beard, and put false hair on his head, or bound up his own natural hair in regular hard knots, as unlike nature as he can possibly make it; and after having rendered them immoveable by the help of the fat of hogs, has covered the whole with flour, laid on by a machine with the utmost regularity,—if, when thus attired, he issues forth, and meets a Cherokee Indian, who has bestowed as much time at *his* toilet, and laid on with equal care and attention his yellow and red ochre, on particular parts of his forehead or cheeks, as he judges most becoming; whoever of these two despises the other for this attention to the fashion of his country, which ever first feels himself provoked to laugh; *is the barbarian.*"*

* Discourse VII.

It is not necessary, however, to have recourse to savage life, to feel how completely the ornamental and the ridiculous in all the adventitious embellishments of fashion, differ only as the eyes which behold them are different. The most civilized European may soon become, in this respect, a Cherokee, and in his nice absurdities of decoration, be himself the very thing at which he would have laughed before.

Weary as we soon become of whatever we have admired, our weariness is not more rapid than our admiration of something *new*, which *follows* it, or rather precedes it. It seems, as if, in order to produce this delightful emotion, nothing more were necessary for us than to say, Let this be beautiful. The power of enchantment is almost verified in the singular transformations which are thus produced; and in many of these, fashion is employed in the very way in which magic has been commonly fabled to be employed,—in making monsters, who are as little conscious of their degradation, while the voluntary metamorphose lasts, as the hideous but unknowing victims of the enchanter's art. A few *months*, or perhaps even a few *weeks*, may, indeed, shew them what monsters they have been; but what is monstrous in the *past*, is seen only by the unconscious monsters of the *present hour*, who are again, in a few months, to laugh at their own deformity. What we *are*, in fashion, is ever beautiful; but nothing is in fashion so *ridiculous*, as the *beauty* which has been; as in journeying with sunshine before us, what is immediately *under our eye* is *splendour*; but if we

look back, we see a long *shadow* behind us, though all, which is shadow now, was once brilliant, as the very track of brightness along which we move.

The influence of *fashion*, on the mere trappings of dress, or furniture, or equipage, is the more valuable as an illustration, from the *rapidity* of its changes, and the universality of the emotion which it excites, that render it absolutely impossible for the most sceptical to doubt its power. The influence of particular associations on *individual* minds, is, indeed, as powerful as the more general influence which, in each individual on whom it operates, is only one of the forms of that very particular influence. But, in these cases, it might have been doubted whether the peculiarity, ascribed to association, might not rather have arisen from *constitutional diversity*. In the changes of *universal fashion*, however, there can be no doubt as to the nature of the sway that has been exercised; since every one will readily allow, in another, that change, of which he is conscious in himself.

Yet, even though what is commonly termed *fashion*, the modifier or creator of general feeling, had not been, it is scarcely possible that we should not have discovered the influence of *circumstances*, on our individual emotions. Even in the mere scenery of nature, which, in its most majestic features,—its mountains,—its rivers,—its cataracts, seems by its permanence, to mock the power of man; how differently do the same objects affect us, in consequence of the mere antecedents of former feelings, and former events! The hill and the waterfall may be plea-

sing to every eye; but how doubly beautiful do they seem to the very heart of the expatriated Swiss, who almost looks as he gazes on them, for the cottage of his home, half gleaming through the spray, as if they were the very hill and the waterfall, which had been the haunt of his youth. To the exile, in every situation, what landscape is so beautiful as that which recalls to him, perhaps, the bleakest and dreariest spot of the country, which he has not seen for many dismal years? The softest borders of the lake, the gentle eminences, that seem to rise only to slope into the delightful valleys between,—the fields,—the groves, —the vineyards, in all their luxuriance, these have no beauty to his eye. But let his glance fall on some rock, that extends itself, without one tuft of vegetation; or on some heath or morass, of still more gloomy barrenness; and what was *indifference* till then, is indifference no more. There is an instant emotion at his heart, which, though others might scarcely conceive it to be that of *beauty*, is beauty to him; and it is to this part of the scene, that his waking eye most frequently turns; as it is it alone which he mingles in his dreams, with the well-remembered scenery of other years.

That our emotion of beauty, which arises from *works of art*, is susceptible of modification, by accidental circumstances, is equally evident. There are tastes in composition, of which we are able to fix the period, almost with the same accuracy as we fix the dates of any of those great events, which fill our tables of chronology. What is *green* or *scarlet* to the eyes of the infant, is *green* or *scarlet* to the

same eyes in boyhood, in youth, in mature manhood, in old age; but the work of art, which gives delight *to the boy*, may excite no emotion, but that of contempt or disgust, *in the man*. It must be a miserable ballad indeed, which is not read or heard with interest, in our first years of curiosity; and every dauber of a village sign-post, who knows enough of his art, to give *four* legs, and not *two* merely, to his red lion, or blue bear, is sure of the admiration of the little critic, who stops his hoop or his top to gaze on the wonders of his skill.

Even in the judgments of our maturer years, when our discernment of beauty has been quickened by frequent exercise; and the study of the works of excellence of every age, has given us a corresponding quickness in discerning the opposite imperfections, which otherwise we might not have perceived—how many circumstances are there, of which we are, perhaps, wholly unconscious, that modify our general susceptibility of the emotions of this class! Our youth, our age, our prevailing or temporary passions, the peculiar admiration which we may feel for some favourite author, who has become a favourite, perhaps, from circumstances that had little relation to his general merit, may all concur, with other circumstances as contingent, in giving diversity to sentiments, which otherwise might have been the same. It is finely observed by La Bruyere, in his Discours de Receptien, in 1693, when Corneille was no more, and Racine still alive:—"Some," says he, "cannot endure, that Corneille should be preferred, or even thought *equal* to him. They appeal to the age that

is about to succeed. They wait, till they shall no longer have to count the voices of some old men, who, touched indifferently with whatever recalls to them the first years of their life, love certainly, in his Œdipus, only *the remembrance of their youth.*" The same idea is happily applied, by another Academician, to account, for the constant presence of love in French tragedy, by the universal sympathy, which it may be expected to excite. "This passion," says he, "which is almost the only one that can interest women, has nearly an equal influence on the other sex. How many are there, who have never felt any very violent emotions of *ambition* or *vengeance!* Scarcely is there *one,* who has been exempt from love. The young are perhaps under its influence at present. With what pleasure do they recognize *themselves* in all which they see and hear! The old *have* loved. How delightful to them, to be recalled to their fairest and happiest years, by the picture of what was then the liveliest occupation of their thought! The mere *remembrance* is, to them, a second youth."

If the emotion of beauty, which we receive from external things, and works of intellectual art, be thus under the controul of our passions and remembrances, the pleasure of *moral beauty* is also, in some measure, under the same controul. The great principles of moral distinction are, indeed, too deeply fixed in our breast, by our Divine Author, to allow *approbation* and *pleasure* to be attached to the *contemplation of pure malignity,* or withheld from *pure*

benevolence. When evil is admired, therefore, it is in consequence of some disproportionate admiration attached to some real or supposed accompanying good; but still it is in the power of circumstances, to produce this disproportionate admiration, and consequently to modify, in a great degree, the resulting *emotion of moral beauty.* In one age, or in one country, the self-denying virtues are held in highest estimation,—in another age, or another country, the gentler social affections. There are periods of society, in which *valour,*—that gave *virtue* its *name* in the early ethics of one mighty people,—constitutes almost the whole of that national *virtue,* which commands general reverence, at the expence of the calmer and far nobler virtues of peace. There are other systems of polity, in which these civil virtues rise to their just pre-eminence; and in which valour is admired, less for its absolute unthinking intrepidity, than for its relation to the sacred rights, of which it is the guardian, or the avenger; nor does the estimation perish completely with the circumstances that gave rise to it. At Rome, even when Roman liberty had bowed the neck to that gracious despot, who prepared, by the habit of submission to usurped power, the servility that was afterwards, —while executioner succeeded executioner on the throne of the world,—to smile, and to shudder, and obey, because others had smiled, and shuddered, and kissed the dust before:—in the very triumph of usurpation, when a single hour at Pharsalia had decided the destiny of ages, and Utica had heard the

last voice of freedom, like the fading echo of some divine step retiring from the earth,—still slavery itself could not overcome the silent reverence of the heart, for him who had scorned to be a slave.

"Even when proud Cæsar, 'midst triumphal cars,
The spoils of nations, and the pomp of wars,
Ignobly vain, and impotently great,
Show'd Rome her Cato's figure drawn in state,
As her dead father's reverend image pass'd,
The pomp was darken'd, and the day o'ercast.
The triumph ceased—tears gush'd from every eye;
The world's great victor pass'd unheeded by.
Her last good man dejected Rome adored,
And honour'd Cæsar's less than Cato's sword."*

Such were the emotions with which the actions of Cato were regarded at Rome, and continued to be regarded during the whole reign of the stoical philosophy, producing those extravagant comparisons of a mortal and the gods, which were not more impious than absurd, and which were little accordant with the general spirit of a system of philosophy, of which *piety to the gods* was one of the most honourable characteristics. The character of perfect moral beauty, however, which the life of Cato seemed to exhibit to a Roman,—who, if not free, was at least a descendant of the free,—is very different from that which it would exhibit to the slaves, the descendant of slaves, that minister, as their ancestors have ministered, to the insignificant grandeur of some eastern court. I need not say, how very different

* Prologue to Cato, by Mr Pope, v. 27—36.

feelings, also, it excites in the mind of those whom Christianity has taught a system of morals, that surpasses the morality of stoicism as much as the purest doctrines of the Porch surpassed, in moral excellence, the idle and voluptuous profligacy of other systems.

With these striking facts before us, it seems impossible, then, to contend for any beauty that is absolutely *fixed* and *invariable*. That *general susceptibility* of the *emotion, sensitive, intellectual,* and *moral,* which forms a part of our mental constitution, is, it appears, so *modified* by the circumstances in which individuals are placed, that objects, which, but for these circumstances, would *not* have appeared beautiful to us, *do* seem beautiful; and that other objects, from the same cause, cease to give that delight which they otherwise would have produced. It is obviously, therefore, impossible to determine, *with perfect certainty,* the great point in question as to original beauty; since, whatever our primary original feelings may have been, they must, by the influence of such modifying circumstances, that are operating from the very moment of our birth, be altogether diversified, before we are able to speculate concerning them, and, perhaps, even in the *infant,* before any visible signs of his emotions can be distinctly discovered.

Since we cannot, then, decide with confidence, either affirmatively or negatively, in such circumstances, all which remains, in sound philosophy, is a comparison of mere *probabilities.* Do these, however, lead us to suppose, that, originally, all objects

are equally capable of receiving the primary influences of arbitrary or contingent circumstances, *which alone determine them to be beautiful?* or do they not rather indicate original tendencies in the mind, in consequence of which it more readily receives impressions of beauty from *certain* objects than from *others*,—however susceptible of modification these original tendencies may be, so as afterwards to be varied or overcome by the more powerful influence of occasional causes?

It must not be supposed, in an inquiry of this kind, that we are to look to those high delights which beauty, in its most attractive forms, affords; for, though it may be false, that all the pleasure of beauty is derived from adventitious circumstances, it is certainly true, at least, that our most valuable pleasures of this class are derived from circumstances, with which our imagination has learned to embellish objects. The only reasonable question is, not whether the chief emotions, which we now term *emotions* of beauty, be referable to this source, but whether we must necessarily refer to it every emotion of this class, of every species and degree.

If, then, in our estimate of mere probabilities, we attend to the signs which the infant exhibits, almost as soon as objects can be supposed to be known to him, it is scarcely possible not to suspect, at least, that some emotions of this kind *are* felt by him. The brilliant colours, in all their variety of gaudiness, which delight the child and the savage, may not, indeed, be the same which give *most* gratification to our refined sensibility; but still they do give

to the child, as they give to the savage, a certain gratification, and a gratification which we should, perhaps, still continue to feel, if our love of mere gaudy colouring were not *overcome* by the delight which, in after life, we receive from other causes that are inconsistent with this simple pleasure—a delight arising from excellencies, which the child and the savage have *not* had skill to discern, but which, when discerned, produce the impression of beauty, in the same manner as the brilliant varieties of colour, perhaps, that are easily distinguished, and, therefore, instantly felt to be beautiful. What child is there, who, in a toyshop, does not prefer the gaudiest toy, if all other circumstances of attraction are the same? or rather, to what child are not this very glare and glitter the chief circumstances of attraction? and in what island of savages have our circumnavigators found the barbarian to differ in this respect from the child? The refined critic may indeed feel differently; but this, as I have said, does not arise from defect of that original tendency to receive a pleasing emotion from the contemplation of those brilliant patchworks of colours, which, though he has learned to regard them as tawdry, he would, in other circumstances, have admired with the savage, but from the developement of tendencies to receive pleasure from other causes, which are inconsistent with this earlier delight,—tendencies which are original, like the other, existing in the mind of the savage as much as in his own more cultivated mind, but existing there inertly, because circumstances have not arisen to develope them.

It is vain to say, in this case, that the pleasure which the gaudy patches of colour afford, is not an EMOTION *of any sort*, but a mere *pleasure of sense*; for, of the direct *sensual* pleasure of the different rays of light, we are capable of judging, as well as the child; and, though we still continue to feel, in many cases, an emotion of beauty from objects on which brilliant colours are spread in various proportions, we are able to make a sort of analysis of our complex feeling; so as in some degree to distinguish our admiring emotion as a result of the previous sensitive feeling, by which the colours became visible to us. If we were to judge by these primary sensitive feelings *alone*, it certainly would not be on the most brilliant colours that our eye would love to rest, with that intentness of vision to which the subsequent emotion of beauty leads, by the delight which it superadds, before the tawdry has been distinguished from finer species of beauty. On such colours, it would even be painful for it to rest, with that species of contemplation which the child indulges,—a contemplation, in which, if there be many dazzling hues to glitter on him, he exhibits often to those around him an intensity of delight, that, if we did not make allowance for the more violent natural expression of pleasure, in our early years, might seem even to surpass our more refined gratifications,—when the sources of this happy emotion have been rendered at once more copious and more pure, and our sensibility has been quickened by the very happiness which it has enjoyed.

The delight, it must be remembered too, arises not merely from the specific differences of colours as more or less pleasing, in which case the most pleasing could not be too widely spread, but from distributions of colours in gaudy variety, exactly as in the finer arrangements of tints, which are beauty to our maturer discernment.

I have said, that from the undoubted effect of circumstances, in modifying our original tendencies, and of circumstances that may, in some degree, have operated before we are capable of ascertaining their influence, it is only an estimate of probabilities to which our inquiry can lead. In vision, however, as far back as we can trace the emotion of beauty, some original emotion of this kind does seem to be felt in colours, and varied arrangements of colours; and if from vision we pass to that sense which is next to it in importance as a source of the feelings, that produce our emotion of beauty, we shall find another tribe of our sensations, that seem, in like manner, to favour the supposition of some original beauty, however inferior to those other analogous emotions of delight which are to be the growth of our maturer years. The class to which I allude, are our sensations of sound, a class which seems to me peculiarly valuable for illustration, as shewing, I conceive, at once, the influence of original tendencies, and also of the modifying power of contingent circumstances. In different nations, we find different casts of music to prevail; in the variety of these national melodies, therefore, we recognize the *power of circumstances*

in diversifying the original feelings. But to this diversifying power there are limits; for, however different the peculiar spirit of the national melodies may be, we find that in all nations certain successions of sounds alone are regarded as pleasing,—those which admit of certain mathematical proportions in their times of vibration. It is not every series of sounds, then, that is capable of exciting the emotion of beauty, but only certain series, however varied these may be. The universality of this law of beauty in one of our senses, in which delight is felt from mere arrangements or successions of sounds, is a ground of *presumption*, at least, that all beauty is not *wholly* contingent, and affords analogies, which, not as *proofs*, indeed, but simply *as analogies*, may fairly be extended to the other senses.

Even that fine species of beauty, which is to be found in the *expression of character*, in animated forms, at least if we admit that species of silent language, which has been called the language of natural signs, does not seem to be, in all its varieties, absolutely dependent on the mental associations of the being who beholds it. These connexions, indeed, of the corporeal signs of mental qualities, with the qualities which they have been found to express, give to the beauty that is admired by us, in our maturer years, its principal power; but, though many, and, perhaps, the far greater number of these signs are unquestionably learned by experience, there seems reason to think, or at least there is no valid ground of positive disbelief, that there are at least some natural signs independent of experience, and equally

universal in use and in interpretation. A smiling countenance, for example, appears, if we may judge from the language of his own little features, to be agreeable to the infant, and a frowning countenance to be disagreeable to him, as soon as he is capable of observing the different lineaments or motions which are developed in the smile or frown; though, I admit, it would be too much to say, with certainty, that even these signs, which we term natural, may not themselves be acquired by earlier observations than any which we are accustomed to take into account. Yet still, though the interpretation, even in these cases, *may*, however early, result from still earlier experience only, this has not been proved; nor is it necessary, from the general analogies of mind, to *assume* it as certain, without particular proof in the particular case. To those, therefore, whose philosophical spirit is easily alarmed by the word instinct, as if it expressed a connexion *peculiarly* mysterious, when, in truth, every connexion of one feeling with another, is equally mysterious, or equally free from mystery, and cannot fail to be so regarded by every one who has learned to consider accurately what is meant, even by the most regular antecedences and consequences of the events of nature;—to that class of philosophers, who think that the word experience accounts for every thing, without reflecting on what it is that experience itself must primarily have been founded,—it may seem unphilosophic thus to speak of the possible *instinctive* use, or *instinctive* interpretation of smiles, or frowns, or signs of any sort. Yet, how many

cases are there, in which it is absolutely impossible to deny these very instincts? and cases, too, in which the immediate effect of the instinct, as much as in the supposed case of beauty, is the production of emotion of some sort, or at least of the visible signs of emotion. In some of the lowest of the animals which we have domesticated,—in the cry of the hen, for example, the first time that a bird of prey is seen hovering at a distance, that cry, of which the *force* is so instantly, and so fully comprehended, by the little tremblers that cower beneath her wing, who does not perceive, in this immediate emotion of terror, an interpretation of natural signs, as instinctive as the language of affection that is instinctively used? Such a cry of alarm, indeed, is not necessary to the human mother of the little creature that has a safer shelter continually around him. But there are positive signs of pleasure, of which a delightful emotion may be the immediate consequence, as there are negative signs, which are merely warnings of evil to be shunned, that are followed immediately by an emotion of a different kind; and these additional sources of enjoyment, it is not unworthy of the kindness of Heaven to have communicated to the infant, who may thus feel, in the caress, a delight of more than mere tactual softness. The cry of the parent fowl scarcely seems more quick to be understood, than the smile of the mother, to awake in the little heart that throbs within her arms an answering delight; nor is there any philosophic inconsistency in supposing it, whatever error there might be in affirming it positively,

to be a part of a natural language of emotion, which, like the undoubted natural language of other animals, is instinctively understood, in every age of life, as in every nation of the globe, and which is already felt as happiness or affection, before the happiness, of which it is the promise, can itself have been felt or even anticipated.

Of a still finer species of emotion, perhaps, than even that which arises from looks or features of the living countenance, may be counted the pleasure which is felt from the contemplation of moral beauty; and yet, if we trace back this feeling through a series of years, in the progress of individual emotion—though we may find many variations of it in various circumstances,—it is far from certain, that we shall find it more lively in *manhood*, than in the early years of the unreflecting boy. It is not to be expected, indeed, that *moral beauty* is to be felt, before the *consequences* of actions, which render them to our conception *moral*, can be appreciated,—or that it is to be felt, but in those *very* cases, *in which such consequences can be known.* There are many offences, therefore, that excite our instant abhorrence, of which a boy cannot feel the moral atrocity,—as there are many virtues, of which he is incapable of feeling the moral charm. But, in virtuous actions, of which the *nature* can be *distinctly conceived* by him, he is not the *dullest* to feel what is lovely,—nor the dullest to feel, mixed with his indignation and his pity, disgust at actions of a different sort. In the ballad which he exults or weeps to hear, he loves and hates with a love and hatred, at least as strong

as are felt by those to whom he listens; and it seems as if, far from requiring any slow growth of circumstances, to mature or develope his emotions, there were nothing more necessary to his feeling of the *beauty* of an heroic sacrifice, than his knowledge that an act was truly heroic,—and nothing more necessary to his emotions of an opposite kind, than his knowledge that there was cruelty, or ingratitude on earth.

The observations which I have now made on different species of beauty, are not urged by me, as of evidence sufficient to prove, positively, that we *have* feelings of beauty, which may be said to be original or independent of accidental associations of every sort; since this point, as I have already stated, is beyond our power to determine with perfect accuracy, because the mind cannot be a subject of our distinct examination, till many accidental causes, of the power of which, in the peculiar circumstances of the infant mind, we may be without the slightest suspicion, may have modified its original tendencies in the most important respects. The burthen of proof, however, does not rest with the believers, but with the deniers of original beauty; and, since the inquiry has not for its object what may be *affirmed with certainty*, but merely what may be *regarded as more or less probable*, even these very slight remarks, may perhaps have been sufficient to shew the greater probability to be on the side of that opinion, which supposes that all objects are not originally to the mind the same in beauty or deformity, or, to speak more accurately, that all objects are not origi-

nally equally *incapable* of exciting either of these emotions,—but, on the contrary, that, though accidental circumstances may produce one or other of these emotions, when, but for the mere accidents, neither of them would have been produced,—or may variously *modify*, or even reverse in some cases, the original tendencies,—there yet are in the mind some original tendencies, independent of all association,—tendencies to feel the emotion of beauty on the contemplation of certain objects, and the emotion opposite to that of beauty, on the contemplation of certain other objects.

This latter supposition, which,—*doubtful* as the question *must*, from the very nature of the circumstances, always be,—seems to my own belief the more reasonable, is rendered, I think, not less, but more certain, by the arguments which are urged against it—arguments that seem to me founded on a very false view of the circumstances that should be expected to follow, if the doctrine against which they are urged were just, or which, at least, are not applicable to the particular view which I have given you of beauty as an *emotion*, not a direct *sensation*.

It is not a *sense of beauty*, you must have remarked, for which I have contended—a *sense*, which, like our other senses, must force upon the mind constantly, or almost constantly, a particular feeling, when a particular object is present. The feeling of *beauty*, according to my view of it, is not a *sensation*, but an *emotion*,—a feeling subsequent to the perception or conception of the object termed beautiful; and which, like other emotions, may, or may not, follow the par-

ticular perception or conception, according to the circumstances in which those *primary* feelings, to which it is only *secondary*, may have arisen.

It is vain, therefore, to contend, that objects, which previously impressed us with no feeling of their beauty, *may become* beautiful to us, in consequence of associations; that is to say, of former pleasing or unpleasing feelings, peculiar to ourselves —for though it might be absurd to suppose that these former feelings could give us a new *sense*, it is far from absurd, that the objects of them may become to our minds the subjects of new pleasing *emotions*—and of emotions similar, perhaps, to those which were formerly excited by other objects. That we are *originally* susceptible of various *other* emotions is admitted, and even *contended*, by those who would trace to the suggestion of them our feeling of beauty; and these original susceptibilities they will surely allow, may, like the susceptibility of beauty, be variously modified, by the circumstances in which the individual may be placed, and may be produced, in consequence of former associations, in circumstances in which they otherwise would not have arisen. There is not a single emotion, indeed, which does not admit of constant modifications in this way. Our love, our hate, our wonder, are at least as much dependant on the nature of our past feelings, as our delight in what seems to us beautiful. Why should this *one* emotion, then, be expected to differ from our other emotions, which are confessedly capable of being awakened or suspended,

in different circumstances, though the mere object of contemplation be the same? To those, accordingly, who, from being accustomed to consider beauty as either permanent and unchangeable in objects, or as absolutely *contingent on accidental associations*, may find some difficulty in reconciling original beauty, of any sort or degree, with that influence of circumstances, which may modify it or overcome it, it may be of some assistance, to consider the analogy of our other emotions;—since we shall find, that this original tendency, subject to modification, which I suppose to take place in our feelings of beauty—is what truly takes place in our other emotions; with which, therefore, the emotion of beauty, in its variations in various circumstances, may well be supposed to correspond. Let us take, for example, our emotions of *desire*—feelings as lively, at least, as our emotion of beauty, and in many cases far more lively—which arise in the mind, too, in circumstances in some degree similar,—not on the contemplation of a present delightful object, indeed, like beauty, but on the contemplation of some delight that is future. No one, surely, whatever his opinion may be, as to the original indifference of objects that now seem beautiful, will maintain, that all objects, painful and pleasing, are equally capable, *originally*, of exciting the emotion of desire. Yet no one, I conceive, will deny, that it is in the power of *general fashion*, or of *various accidental* circumstances, to render objects *desirable*, or, in other words, *capable* of exciting, when contemplated, this

emotion of desire, that otherwise would have been not indifferent merely, but perhaps positively disliked; and to make objects *cease to be desirable*, which would have been highly prized by us, but for the factitious circumstances of society, or accidents that may have operated on ourselves with peculiar influence. There is a *mode*, in our very *wishes*, as there is a mode in the external habiliments which we wear; and, in their different objects, the *passions* of different ages and countries are at least *as* various, as the works of taste, to which they give their admiration. When, at the Restoration, the austerity of the Protectorate was succeeded by the disgraceful profligacy of the royal court, and when there was an immediate change of the desirableness of certain objects, as if our very susceptibilities of original passion had been changed, we do not suppose that any real change took place *in the native constitution of man*. In every original moral tendency or affection, he was precisely what he was before. In all ages, the race of mankind are born with certain susceptibilities, which, if circumstances were not different, would lead them as one great multitude to form very nearly the *same wishes;* but the difference of circumstances produces a corresponding diversity of passions, that scarcely seems to flow from the same source. In like manner, the race of mankind, considered as a great multitude, *might be* in all ages endowed with the same susceptibilities of the *emotion of beauty*, which would lead them, upon the whole, to find the same pleasure, in the contemplation of the same objects,—if different circum-

stances did not produce views of utility, and associations of various sorts, that diversify the emotion itself. It is the same in different periods of life of the same individual; the desirableness of objects varying, at least, as much as the feeling of beauty. I may add, that, as there seem to be, in individuals, original constitutional tendencies to certain passions, rather than to others; so there might be a constitutional difference, with respect to *the original susceptibility of the emotion of beauty*, that, of itself, might render certain objects more delightful to certain minds than others. But still, when the race of mankind are considered *as one great multitude*,—as their *native original tendencies to passion* may be considered as the same,—their *native original susceptibilities of the pleasing impressions of beauty*, in certain cases, might also have been the same; though, as these original tendencies, if they did exist, might yet admit of being variously diversified, to measure them by any *standard*, would, even in these circumstances, be still as impracticable, as if there were no original tendencies whatever. There is no standard of *desire;* and as little, even in these circumstances, should we expect to find an absolute standard of *beauty*. All of which we might philosophically speak, would be the *agreement* of the *greater number* of *mankind* in *certain desires*, and the *agreement of the greater number of cultivated minds* in certain *emotions of beauty*.

That the feeling of beauty, which so readily arises when the mind is passive, and capable, therefore, of long trains of reverie, should not arise when the mind

is *busied* with other objects of contemplation,—or even, in any very high degree, when the mind is employed in contemplating the beautiful object itself, but in contemplating it, with a critical estimation of its merits or defects,—is no proof, as has been supposed, that trains of *associate* images are *essential* to the production of the emotion, but is what might very naturally be suspected, though no such trains were at all concerned. The feeling of beauty, it must be remembered, is not, as I have already said, a sensation, but an emotion. A certain *perception* must *previously* exist; and though the perception may have a tendency to induce that different state of mind which constitutes the emotion, it has a tendency also, by suggestion, to induce many other states, and in certain circumstances, when there are any strong desires in the mind, may induce those other states, which may be accordant with the paramount existing desires, more readily than the emotion which has no peculiar accordance with them. It is the same in this case, too, with our other emotions, as with that of beauty. When we are intent on a train of study, how many objects occur to the mind, which, in other circumstances, would be followed by other emotions,—by various *desires*, for example,—but which are not followed by their own specific desires, merely in consequence of our greater interest in the subject, the relations of which we are studying. Nor is this peculiar to our emotions only. It extends in some degree even to our very sensations. In two individuals who walk

along the same meadow, the one after suffering some very recent and severe affliction, and the other with a light heart, and an almost vacant mind, how very different, in number and intensity, are the mere sensations that arise at every step! Yet we surely do not deny, to him who scarcely knows that there are flowers around him, an original susceptibility of being affected by the fragrance of that very violet, the faint odour of which is now wafted to him in vain.

The great argument, however, which is urged by the deniers of any original beauty, is founded on that very view of the fluctuations of *all* our emotions of this class, which I endeavoured to exhibit to you in the early part of this Lecture. When we consider the changes of every kind, with respect to all, or, at least, nearly all the varieties of this order of our emotions, —not merely in different nations, or different ages of the world, but even in the same individual, in the few years that constitute his life,—and in many important respects, perhaps, in a few months or weeks, —can we suppose, they say, that amid these incessant changes, of which it is not difficult for us to detect the source, there should be any beauty that deserves the honourable distinction of being independent and original? In what respect, however, does this formidable argument differ from that equally formidable argument, which might be urged against the distinctions of truth and falsehood?—those distinctions, which it is impossible for the very sceptic, who professes to deny them, not to admit in his own internal conviction,—and the validity of which, the

deniers of any original beauty would be far from denying, or even wishing to weaken; since the very wish to convince of the truth of their theory, whatever it may be, must be founded on this very distinction of a peculiar capacity in the mind, of a feeling of the truth of certain arguments, rather than of certain opposite arguments. If our *tastes*, however, fluctuate, do not our opinions of every sort vary in like manner? and is not the objection in the one case, then, as powerful as in the other? or, if powerless in one, must it not be equally powerless in both? I need not speak of different nations, or ages of the world, in *this*, more than of the *other* case,—of the very different systems of opinions of savage, semi-barbarous, and civilized life, in all their varieties of climate and state. Here, too, it is sufficient to think of *one individual*,—to compare the wisdom of the mature well-educated man, with the ignorance of his boyhood, and the proud, but irregular and fluctuating acquirements of his more advanced youth,—and if, notwithstanding all these changes, when perhaps not a single opinion ultimately remains the same, we yet cannot fail to believe, that *truth* is something more than a mere arbitrary feeling, the result of accidental circumstances, that there is, in short, an original tendency in the mind to assent to certain propositions, rather than to certain other propositions opposite to these,—we surely are not entitled to infer from the changes in the emotion of beauty, *not more striking*, that *all* in the mental susceptibility of *it*, is arbitrary and accidental.

Again, however, I must repeat, that in this review of the argument, I am not contending for the positive originality and independence of any species of beauty, but merely considering *probabilities*; and that, although, from the circumstances as they appear to us, I am led to adopt the greater probability of *some* original tendencies to feelings of this class, I am far from considering these as forming the most important of the class, or even as bearing any high proportion, in number or intensity, to the multitude of delightful feelings of the same order, that beam for ever, like a sort of radiant atmosphere within, on the *cultivated mind*, becoming thus, in their ever-increasing variety, one of the happiest rewards of years of study, that were too delightful in themselves to need to be rewarded.

LECTURE LVI.

I. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS, NOT NECESSARILY INVOLVING ANY MORAL FEELING.—3. BEAUTY, AND ITS REVERSE, CONTINUED.—THE EMOTION OF BEAUTY SEEMS TO BE AN ORIGINAL FEELING OF THE MIND.—MR ALISON'S THEORY.

GENTLEMEN, the inquiries which engaged us in the Lecture of yesterday, related to the influence of accidental circumstances, on our emotion of beauty,—an influence which we found to be capable of producing the most striking diversities, in our susceptibility of these emotions, of every species, whether arising from the contemplation of objects *material, intellectual,* or *moral.* So *very striking,* indeed, did these diversities appear, on our review, as naturally to give occasion to the inquiry, whether feelings, that vary so *much,* with all the variety of the circumstances that have preceded them, may not *wholly depend* on that influence, on which they have manifestly depended, to so great an extent. I stated to you, that, in such an inquiry, it is not possible to attain confidence in the result, since all the circumstances which it would be necessary to know, cannot be known to us. It is long

before the intellectual processes of the infant mind are capable of being distinctly revealed to another, directly or indirectly; and, in this most important of all periods, when thought is slowly evolved from the rude elements of sensation, the very circumstance, the influence of which we wish to trace, must have been exerting an influence that is wholly unperceived by us. The question, therefore, as to any susceptibility in the mind, of being affected with impressions of original beauty, is a question of probabilities, and nothing more.

Proceeding, then, with this limited confidence, in the results of our inquiry, we endeavoured to consider the phenomena of this order of our emotions, —not, indeed, in perfect freedom from the influence of preceding accidental circumstances, since this distinct analysis is beyond our power, but with as near an approach to it as it was possible for us to attain; and, after a comparison of the probabilities, we found, I think, reason, I will not say to *believe*, but at least to incline to the opinion, that we *are* truly endowed with some original susceptibilities of this class,—susceptibilities, however, that are not *so* independent of arbitrary circumstances of association as to be incapable of being *modified*, or even wholly overcome by other tendencies that may be superinduced, but which, at the same time, are not so dependent on such circumstances, as, when these circumstances have not occurred to favour them, nor any other circumstance more powerful to counteract them, to be, of themselves, incapable of affecting us, in the

slightest degree with any of those delightful emotions, of which we have been endeavouring to trace the origin.

In examining this point, it was of great importance to make you sufficiently acquainted with one radical distinction; and, I trust, that now, after the remarks which I made, you are in no danger of confounding that view of beauty, which regards it as an *emotion*, dependent on the existence of certain previous perceptions or conceptions, which may induce *it*, but may also, by the operation of the common laws of suggestion, induce, at other times, in like manner, *other* states of mind, exclusive of the emotion,—with the very different doctrine, that regards beauty as the object of a peculiar internal *sense*, which might, therefore, from the analogy conveyed in that name, be supposed to be as uniform in its feelings, as our other senses, on the presence of their particular objects, are uniform, or nearly uniform, in the intimations afforded by *them*. Such a *sense* of beauty, as a fixed regular object, we assuredly have not; but it does not follow, that we are without such an original susceptibility of a mere emotion, that is not, like sensation, the direct and uniform effect of the presence of its objects, but may vary in the occasions on which it rises, like our other emotions; love, for example, or hate, or astonishment, which various circumstances may produce, or various other circumstances may prevent from arising.

In conformity, then, with this view, though, from the comparison of all the circumstances of the case, as far as they can be known to us, I am led to re-

gard the mind, as having originally certain tendencies to emotions of beauty, in consequence of which it may be impressed with them, on the contemplation of certain objects, without the necessary previous influence of any contingent circumstances, I yet allow the power of such circumstances, not merely to produce analogous emotions, when otherwise these would not have arisen, but also to modify, and even, in some cases, to overcome our original tendencies themselves, in the same manner, as we found that our original tendencies to other emotions might be modified and overcome, in particular cases of a different kind. I allow this influence of circumstances on our emotions of beauty, in the same manner, as I allow the very general empire of prejudice, and the power of all the accidental circumstances, which may prepare the mind, less or more, for the reception, or for the denial of truth, though I do not regard truth itself as arbitrary in its own nature;—that is to say, since truth is only a general name of a feeling common to many propositions, I do not regard all propositions, and the propositions opposite to them, as equally fitted to excite this feeling of truth in the mind. The analogy of truth, indeed, as that which there is a greater original tendency to feel, in certain propositions, than in others, though a tendency, which circumstances may, in certain minds, weaken and even reverse, seems to me a very important one, in this discussion, since precisely the same arguments which are urged by those who contend for the *exclusive influence of association* in the production of beauty, might be urged, as I shewed

you, with equal force, against those distinctions of truth and falsehood, which the assertors of the creative influence of association, in the less important department of taste, would surely be unwilling to abandon. If it be *in the power of circumstances*, to make us regard objects as *beautiful*, which, but for those circumstances, would not have excited any emotion whatever, and, in many cases, even to *reverse* our emotions, which is all that the deniers of original beauty can maintain; it is not less *in the power of circumstances*, as the history of the different superstitions of the world, and of the very schools of wisdom, in all the various departments of philosophy, sufficiently shews, to make us regard as *true*, what we otherwise should have regarded as *false*, and *false* what we otherwise should have regarded as *true*. The mind is formed, indeed, to *feel truth*, and to *feel beauty*; but it is formed also to be affected by circumstances, the influence of which may, in any particular case, be inconsistent with either of those feelings; and the resulting belief, or the resulting emotion, may naturally be supposed to vary with the strength of these accidental circumstances.

When I say, then, of the mind, that there seems greater reason, on the whole, to suppose it endowed with some original susceptibility of this pleasing emotion, I speak of these original susceptibilities, as developed in circumstances, in which the feelings which certain objects would naturally tend to excite, are not opposed by more powerful feelings; by views of utility for example,—which are promoted, in many cases, by deviations from forms, that of themselves

would be the most pleasing—or, by the influence of *habitual* or even *accidental* associations. These unquestionably may, as we have already seen, suspend and even reverse our emotions of beauty, as they suspend or reverse our other emotions, even our most powerful emotions of desire; but, though they do this, it may be only in the same way, as every greater force overcomes a *less*, which still implies the existence of that *less*, though, if we saw only the one simple emotion, that results from the conflict of the unequal forces, we may be led to think that the impelling cause also was simple, and wholly in the direction of the emotions which we perceive. The writers, therefore, who would reduce our emotions of beauty entirely to the influence of *association*, and who endeavour to justify their theory, by instances of the power of particular associations, seem to make far too great an assumption. They do not prove the influence of original beauty to be *nothing*, by proving the influence of other principles to be something *more*. What eye is there, however little exercised it may be in discriminating forms, which does not, at least in the mature state of the mind, whatever it may have done originally, feel the beauty of the circle or of the ellipse, considered simply as figures, without regard to any particular end? and, though it may be easy to collect instances, in which we prefer to these forms, some one of the angular figures, on account of some useful purpose, to which the angular figure, though less pleasing in itself, may be subservient,—this does not prove that the curve is not felt as more beautiful *in itself*, but only that it

is not felt to be beautiful, where the pleasing emotion, which of itself it would excite, is overcome, by the painful feeling that arises from *obvious unfitness*, in comparison with some other figure more suitable. Though a *circle*, for example, may, in *itself*, be *more pleasing*, than an *oblong*, we may yet prefer an *oblong* for our doors and windows; the feelings of comparative convenience and inconvenience being more powerful than the feelings which they overcome, of beauty in the mere form, considered without reference to an end; or rather the fitness of one form for the use intended, involving in itself a species of beauty which may be termed *natural beauty* as much as the other. In the mere *bodily sense* of *taste*, we never think of contending, that all the original affections of the sense are *indifferent*, and *become agreeable* or *disagreeable*, by mere association; yet we know well, that it is in the power of *habit* to *modify* and *reverse* these feelings, so as to render a *luxury* to one, what is absolutely nauseous to another. Different nations have, indeed, an admiration of very different works of *genius*; but the mere *cookery* of different nations, is, perhaps, still more strikingly various, than their prevalent intellectual tastes. There is unquestionably, however, an original tendency to delight in sweetness, though certain circumstances may induce a preference of what is bitter, and there may, too, easily be an original tendency to feel the emotion of beauty, from certain objects, though, by the similar influence of circumstances, we may be led to prefer to them, colours or propositions of a different kind. Upon the whole, the probable inference, which,

as I have already said, seems to me the most legitimate that can be drawn, from the phenomena of beauty, with respect to its existence as an original emotion, is, that certain objects, various, perhaps, in different individuals, *do tend, originally,* and without any views of indirect utility, or any previous associations, to excite emotions that are *agreeable in themselves,* and capable of being *reflected back,* and combined with the agreeable object; but that *these* may be variously *modified,* by *views of utility,* or by permanent or even accidental associations; since there is nothing in any of our original tendencies which implies, that they must be omnipotent, and the same in all times and circumstances. To the child, at least as soon as he is capable of making known to us in any way, his delights and preferences,—certain objects seem to be productive, in a higher degree than others, of that pleasing emotion, which we denominate beauty, when reflected and embodied, as it were, in the objects that excite it; and *as certainly* this delightful emotion *varies,* in the course of his life, from object to object, innumerable times, according to circumstances, which we may not always be able to detect, but which it is, *generally,* not very difficult to trace, at least in some of their most striking and permanent influences.

In the case of those theories, which would refer all beauty in the forms and colours, or other qualities of material things, to the suggestion of mental qualities, and the succession of associate trains of images in accordance with these, there is one circumstance which may have led to the illusion, if the

theories are truly to be held to be illusive; and it is a circumstance common, you will perceive, to all those cases on which the theories are professedly founded. By the mere laws of suggestion, though no other laws of mind were concerned, and though beauty, as a primary direct emotion, were the exclusive invariable result of certain perceptions in all mankind alike, as immediate as the perceptions themselves, analogous objects would unquestionably suggest analogous objects; and, where the suggestions were rapid, and the pleasing emotion of beauty continued to coexist with various suggestions, it might not be very obvious, when we endeavoured to review the whole series of feelings, to *which* set of feelings the priority should be assigned; and whether the *emotion* which perhaps *led* to the suggestions of the analogous objects, by the mere influence of this *common* delightful feeling, might not be itself rather the result of them. The pleasure which *preceded* the suggestion of an agreeable object, and still continued after that object was suggested, might thus seem to be the effect of the suggestion of the agreeable object itself. When, therefore, in our endeavour to explain the beauty of any corporeal form, we dwell on it for any length of time, or even when we dwell on it with that mere passive gaze of pleasure which its beauty excites, a variety of analogous objects may be suggested during the delightful contemplation; and, among these, since the different *mental* affections, intellectual and moral, which we feel in ourselves, or observe in others, must present

to us the most interesting of all analogies, it is not wonderful that some *analogous mental qualities* should very readily arise in our mind, as any other analogous object is suggested in any other train. The pleasure attached to the contemplation of the mental quality will, of course, blend with the pleasure previously felt from the material object; and may be conceived to be itself the chief constituent of that primary pleasure, since the subsequence is too rapid to be distinguishable on reflection. There is a pleasure also, it must be remembered, in such a case, from the mere perception of the analogy of the coexisting objects of thought,—a pleasure that constitutes the whole charm of the metaphorical language of the poet and the rhetorician,—which gives, therefore, an additional delight to the mental suggestion when the kindred image is suggested, and, consequently, leads us the more to ascribe to *it* the whole delight which we feel. But though, when we consider any forms and colour, simple or combined, the analogy of some mental affection may be suggested, and though, when the analogous feeling *is* suggested, the pleasure of the beauty may be greatly increased, this is no proof that the material objects themselves are not pleasing, independent of the suggestion, though not, perhaps, to an equal degree. The softness of moonshine may derive no slight charm, and perhaps its chief charm, from the mild graces of the mind which it suggests, or the remembrance of many a delightful evening walk with friends whom we loved. But this certainly is far from pro-

ving that this softness of moonshine would not be delightful, in any degree, if it had not excited such analogous conceptions. The sun, bursting, in all his majesty, like the sovereign of the etherial world, through the clouds, which he seems to *annihilate* with the very brightness of his glory, presents unquestionably many moral analogies, which add to our delight, when we gaze, above or below, on that instant change, which all nature seems to feel:—

> "Denso velamine nubis
> Obsitus, et tetrâ pressus caligine Titan,
> Nativo demum radiantis acumine lucis
> Nubila perrumpit Victor, seque asserit orbi,
> Splendidus, et toto rutilans spatiatur Olympo."

The similitude which these beautiful verses develope, is unquestionably most pleasing. But would there, indeed, be no delight in the contemplation of so magnificent an object, if some moral analogy were not excited, and if the sun itself, with the instant succession of darkness and splendour, and the light diffused over every object beneath, were all of which our mind could be said to be conscious?

Though, in this question of probabilities which we have been considering, the *preponderance* seems to me to be in favour of the belief of some original tendencies to the emotion of beauty, on the contemplation of certain objects,—I have already said, that it is only a small part of this order of emotions, which we can ascribe to such a source; and these, as I conceive, of very humble value, in relation to

other more important emotions of the order, which are truly the production of associations of various kinds. Though all objects might not have been originally indifferent, the objects of our livelier emotion at present, are certainly those which speak to us of moral analogies and happy remembrances. It will not be an uninteresting inquiry, then, in what way these associations operate, in giving birth to the emotions, or in aiding them with such powerful accessions of delight. Let us pass, then, from the question of original beauty, to this still more important investigation.

The investigation, when we first enter on it, may seem a very easy one.—It is, as we have found from our examination of the laws of mind, the nature of one object, either perceived or conceived, to suggest, by the common laws which regulate our trains of thought at all times, some *other* object or feeling, that has to it some one of many relations; and this again may suggest others, related to it in like manner. Each suggestion, during a long train of thought, may be the suggestion of some delightful object, and thus, indirectly of the delightful emotions which such objects were of themselves capable of inducing; and though the amount of gratification additional, in each separate suggestion, may be slight, the gratification afforded by a long series of such images, all delightful in themselves, and all harmonizing with the object immediately before us, may be very considerable,—so considerable as to be sufficient not to favour merely, but absolutely to constitute that emo-

tion, to which we give the name of beauty. Such is the view of the origin of this emotion, which has been given, with much felicity of language, and with much happy illustration of example and analysis, by my very ingenious and very eloquent friend, the author of the Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste. The continued suggestion of trains of harmonizing images, Mr Alison considers as essential to the emotion, which consists, according to him, not more in the kindred associate feelings themselves, that are recalled to the mind, than in the peculiar delight attending, what he terms, the exercise of the imagination in recalling them,—that is to say, according to the view which I have given you of our mental functions, the delight which he supposes to attend the mere suggestion of image after image in associate and harmonizing trains of thought. This opinion, as to the delight of the mere exercise of imagination, seems to be founded on the belief of a sort of voluntary exertion of the mind, in such trains, when all which truly takes place in them, as I endeavoured, in former Lectures, to explain to you, is the operation of the common laws of suggestion, that may be pleasing or painful in their influence, precisely as the separate feelings that rise by suggestion, are themselves pleasing or painful. The exercise of imagination, in such a case, is nothing more than these separate states themselves. When we gaze on a beautiful object, we do not call up the analogous images that may arise, but they arise of themselves unwilled, and if the images were of an opposite

kind, the process would itself be painful. Indeed, if the supposed exercise of imagination, were in itself as an exercise of the mind, necessarily pleasing, this exercise, Mr Alison should have remembered, is not confined to objects that are beautiful, but is common to these with the objects that excite emotions opposite to those of beauty, in which, therefore, it would not be very easy for him to account for its different effect. Since, according to his theory, the same species of exercise of imagination is involved in *these* likewise, it is very evident, that, if necessarily pleasing, it should tend, not to *increase*, but to lessen the disagreeable feelings, and to convert ugliness itself into a minor sort of beauty. On the fallacy of this supposed part of the process, however, it is unnecessary for us to dwell. I allude to the supposed *delight* of the mere exercise at present, only to shew, how necessary it has been felt, in this theory, to account by a *multitude* of images, for an amount of delight, which seems too great for any single image in suggestion. Here, then, lies the great difficulty, which that theory has to overcome. To him, who reflects on the circumstances that have attended the emotion, in cases in which it has been most strongly felt, does it appear, on this review, that a series of images succeeding images, *have* passed through his mind? When we turn our eye, for example, on a beautiful living form, is there no immediate, or almost immediate, feeling of delight whatever,—but do we think of many analogies,—and, till these analogies have all been scanned, and the amount of enjoyment, which may have attended the different objects of

them, been measured, is the countenance of smile, or the form of grace, only a mass of coloured matter to our eyes? There are cases, surely, in which the feeling of beauty is immediately consequent on the very perception of the beautiful form,—*so* immediately consequent, that it would be difficult to convince the greater number of those, who have not been accustomed to reflect on such subjects, that there is any subsequence whatever, and that the delightful emotion is not itself the very glance, which gives that happy feeling in instant sequence to the soul. I have no hesitation even in saying, that the more intense the feeling of beauty may be, the *less* is the tendency of the mind to pass from the delightful form, which *fills* the *heart* as it *fills* the *eyes*, to images of distant analogy,—that this transition takes place, chiefly, where the emotion is of a slight kind,—and that what is said to constitute beauty, has thus an inverse, and not a direct proportion, to that very beauty, which it is said directly to constitute. There can be no question, at least, that, in the language of every poet, and of every impassioned describer of these impassioned feelings, the total suspension of all our faculties, but of that which is fixed on the contemplation of the dazzling object itself, is stated as an essential character of excess of this emotion. There is uniformly described a sort of rapturous stupefaction, which overwhelms every other thought or feeling;—and though this, in its full extent, may be true only in those excessive emotions, which belong rather to poetry, than to sober

life,—even in sober life, there is assuredly an approach to it; and we may safely, therefore, venture to assert, that the beauty, which scarcely allows the mind to wander for a moment *from itself*, is not *less* than the beauty, which *allows* its happy admirer to run over the thousand kind and gentle qualities which it expresses, or to wander, still more widely, over a thousand analogies in other objects.

If we attend, then, to the whole course of our feelings, during our admiration of the objects, which we term *beautiful*, we are far from discovering the process, of which Mr Alison speaks. We do not find, that there *is*, at least, that there *is necessarily*, any wide combination, or rapid succession, of trains of those associate images or feelings,—which he terms *ideas of emotion*;—and yet we have seen reason to believe, that the chief part of beauty *is* truly derived from that mental process, which has been termed *association*,—the suggestion of some feeling or feelings, not involved in the primary perception, nor necessarily flowing from it. In what manner, then, does the suggestion act?

The modes, in which it acts, seem to me to be, what I am about to describe,—modes, that are in perfect accordance with the general processes, which we have found to take place in the mind, in the phenomena before considered by us.

The associate feelings, that produce this effect, are, I conceive, of two kinds.—In the first place, any very vivid delight, that may have been accidentally connected with any particular object, may be recall-

ed in suggestion by the same object, so as afterwards to make it seem, in combination with this associate feeling, *more* pleasing than it *originally* seemed to us; and may, in like manner, and with similar effect, as when it is recalled by the *same* object, be recalled directly by an object *similar* or analogous to the former, which thus, even when we *first* gaze upon it, may appear to have a sort of original loveliness, which, but for the rapid and unperceived suggestion, it would not have possessed. *One degree* of beauty is thus acquired,—by every object similar to that which has been a source to us of any primary pleasure,—and with this faint degree of pleasing emotion, other pleasures, arising, perhaps, wholly from accidental sources, at various times, may be combined, in like manner,—rendering the state of mind, in the progressive feeling, more complex, but still, as one feeling or state of the mind, not less capable of being again suggested by the perception of the same or similar objects, than the less complex emotion, that in the first stage preceded it. With every new accidental accession of pleasure, in the innumerable events that occur from year to year, the delight itself becomes *more* complex; till at length the whole amount of complex pleasure, which the same object may afford by this rapid suggestion to the mind which contemplates it, may be as different from that which constituted the feeling of beauty in the fourth or fifth stage of the growth of the emotion, as that beauty itself, in its fourth or fifth stage, differed from the simple original perception. Still,

however, the pleasing emotion, though the gradual result of many feelings of many different stages, is itself always one feeling, or momentary state of the mind, that, as one feeling, admits of being suggested as readily and rapidly in any one stage, as in any of the stages preceding; and it is this immediate state of complex emotion, however slowly and gradually formed, which I conceive to be suggested, when objects appear to us beautiful; not the number of separate delightful states, which Mr Alison's theory supposes to be essentially necessary. We feel the instant emotion of loveliness, on the perception of a particular object, though we may have been years in forming those complex associations, which have rendered the mind capable of now feeling that instant emotion. It is in this way, that a landscape, which bears a resemblance to the scene of our early youth, or to any other scene where we have been peculiarly happy, cannot fail to be felt as more beautiful by *us*, than by others who have not shared with us that source of additional embellishment. The countenance of one who is dear to us, sheds a charm over similar features, that might otherwise scarcely have gained from us a momentary glance. An author, whose work we have read at an early period with delight, when it was, perhaps, one of the earliest gifts which we received, or the memorial of some tender friendship, continues for ever to exercise no inconsiderable dominion over our general taste. In these, and innumerable cases of the same kind, which must have occurred to every one in his own

experience, the direct suggestion is of *an amount of particular delight*, associated with *the particular object*. This, then, is one of the modes in which I conceive the emotion of beauty to be excited, and the chief source of all the pleasure which we class under that comprehensive name. It is sufficiently easy to be understood;—it accounts for the *variety* of emotions in different individuals, when the object which one admires is such as to others seems scarcely of a nature to afford any pleasing emotion whatever;—and, above all, it accounts for those more perplexing anomalies, which we sometimes find in the taste of the same individual, when he admires, in some cases, with an admiration that seems to us scarcely consistent with the refined fastidiousness which he displays on other occasions. The delightful emotion which he feels from objects that appear to others inferior to the far nobler objects of which he disapproves, may, in such cases, be confined to *him*, because the associations from which the emotion has arisen, were *his alone*.

It is in this way, I have said, that the chief pleasure of the emotion arises. But, if all the influence of association on beauty were exercised in this way, by the direct suggestion of a particular amount of pleasure resulting from accidental causes, that have been peculiar to the individual, it would not be easy to account for the whole phenomena of this tribe of emotions,—above all, for those regular gradations of beauty in different objects, which are felt in most cases with so general an agreement by the greater number of cultivated minds, and so uniformly, or

almost uniformly, by the same individual. If every object had its own particular associations in the mind of every individual, and every object many opposite associations, it might be expected, that the emotion of beauty, or at least the estimate of the degree of beauty, would fluctuate in the same individual according to these caprices of accidental suggestion, and in the great multitude of society, would fluctuate at different moments, so as scarcely to admit of being fixed in any way. A face which at one time suggested one particular delight, might suggest by its various analogies, or various circumstances of the past, various degrees of delight, and with these, therefore, a perpetual variety of the resulting emotion. Notwithstanding all this variety, however, we estimate objects very nearly in the same way. There is a notion of excellence acquired in some manner,—a relative notion of fitness to excite a certain amount of delight,—which seems to be for ever in our mind to direct us,—according to which, we fix at some precise degree the varying beauty of the moment. There is every appearance, therefore, in such cases, of the suggestion of one *general* feeling, and not merely of *various* fluctuating feelings. The suggestion of this general feeling, which is in perfect accordance with the laws of thought already investigated by us, forms, I conceive, a second mode of association, in its influence on the emotion of beauty; and it is this chiefly which aids us in fixing the degrees of what we constantly, or almost constantly, recognize as less or more beautiful than certain other

objects,—that is to say, less or more fit to excite in cultivated minds a certain amount of pleasure.

I have already explained to you, in what manner the process of *generalizing* takes place. We see two or more objects,—we are struck with their resemblance in certain respects,—we have a general notion of the circumstances in which they thus resemble each other, to the exclusion, of course, of the circumstances in which they have no resemblance. For many of these mere relative suggestions of resemblance, we invent words, which, from the generality of the notion expressed by them, are denominated *general terms*,—such as *quadruped, animal, peace, virtue, happiness, excellence*,—but, though we invent many such general terms, we invent them, it is evident, only in a very few cases, comparatively with the cases of general feeling of resemblance of some sort, in which they are not invented,—and we apply the same name frequently, in different cases, when the general feelings in our mind, however analogous, are not strictly the same. We apply the word *peace*, for example, to many states of international *rest from war*, which are far from conveying the same notions of safety and tranquillity,—the word *happiness*, to many states of mind which we feel at the same time, or might feel, if we reflected on them, to be, in species and intensity, very different,—the word *beauty*, to many objects which excite in us very different degrees of delightful emotion, and which we readily recognize as fit only to excite the emotion *in these different degrees*. In short, though our general terms be few, our general

feelings are almost infinite,—as infinite as the possible resemblances which can be felt in any two or more objects,—and though we have not words expressive of all the degrees of feeling, we have notions of these degrees *as different*,—notions of various degrees of beauty,—various degrees of happiness,—various degrees of excellence in general,—not embodied in words, but capable of being suggested to the mind by particular objects, as if they were so embodied. These notions have been formed by the mind, in the same way as all its other general notions have been formed—by the observation and comparison of many particulars,—and they arise to the mind on various occasions, when the particulars observed, correspond with the particulars before observed,—in the same way as the word *quadruped*, which we have invented for expressing various animals known to us, occurs to our mind when we see for the first time some other animal, of which we had perhaps never heard, but which agrees, in the feeling of general resemblance which it excites, with the other animals formerly classed by us under that general word. This ready suggestion of general feelings which is continually taking place, in applications of which all must be sensible, and the possibility and likelihood of which no one will deny, is that which I suppose, in the case of the emotion at present considered by us, to direct our general estimate of degrees of beauty,, or, in other words, our relative notion of the fitness of certain objects to excite a pleasing emotion of a certain intensity.

We discover this fitness, as we discover every other species of fitness, by observation of the past,—and by observing this *past* in *others*, as well as in *ourselves*, we correct, by the more general coincidence of the associations of others, what would be comparatively irregular, and capricious in the results of our own limited associations as individuals. The *accidents* of *one*, or of a *few*, when variously mingled, become truly *laws* of thought of the *many*. As this observation is more and more enlarged, the irregularities of individual association, are more and more counteracted by the foresight of the diversities of general sentiment,—till, at length, the beauty of which we think, in our estimates of its degree of excellence, though still, in a certain degree, influenced by former accidental feelings of the individual,—is, in a great measure, the beauty, which we foreknow, that others are to feel,—and which we are capable thus of foreknowing, because we have made a wide induction of the objects, that have been observed by us, to excite the emotion in its various degrees, in the greater number of those, whose emotions we have had opportunities of measuring.

As we say of a well cultivated memory, that it is rich in images of the past, we may say of a well cultivated mind in general, that it is rich in notions of beauty and excellence,—notions, which it has formed by attentive observation and study of various objects, as exciting, in various circumstances, various degrees of delight; but which ever after rise simply and readily to the mind by suggestion, according as the objects, perceived or imagined, are of a nature to har-

monize with them. The general notion of what will be most widely regarded as beauty or excellence, in some one or other of its degrees, rises instantly, or at least may arise instantly to the mind, on the perception of the beautiful or excellent object, and with it the emotions, which have usually attended it. In our estimate of *degrees* of beauty, then, as often as we attempt to calculate these, it is the general notion, that has resulted from the contemplation of many excellent qualities, which, as one state of mind, arises to us, and directs us,—not the *many separate states*, which constitute the remembrances of *many separate qualities*. These, indeed, are not necessarily excluded,—though, as I have already said, they arise less, where the beauty is felt to be great, than where it is felt only in a less degree. Many analogous images may arise, and they do frequently arise; and, if pleasing in themselves, may add to the gratification previously felt; but though they may arise, and when they arise, they increase the amount of pleasure,—they are far from being absolutely necessary to the pleasing emotion itself. Though we have a general notion attached to the word peace, this cannot exist long in our mind, without exciting some particular conception in accordance with it,—though we know what is meant by the general word *animal*, independently of the particular species, which it may at different moments suggest, we yet cannot continue long to think of what is meant by the mere general word, without the suggestion of some particular animals. It would not be wonderful, then, that the general notion of beauty, which we have attached to

a particular form, should, of itself, give rise to particular suggestions of analogy, even though the form, on which we gaze, were not, of itself, capable of suggesting them; and it cannot, surely, be *more* wonderful, that it should allow these suggestions of objects analogous, when the particular form perceived is of a kind, to *concur* in the tendency to this suggestion, with the general notion of beauty itself. It is this subsequent suggestion of trains of associate images, increasing perhaps the effect of the emotion that existed previously as a state of the mind, but not producing it, which has led the very ingenious theorist, to whom I have before alluded, to ascribe to these mere consequences of the feeling of beauty, that very feeling itself, which more probably gave occasion to them. Indeed, if the suggestion of particular images after images, and not the suggestion of one general delight, or the more general suggestion of beauty or excellence itself, be essential to the very existence of the emotion, it seems to me quite impossible to account for that *instant*, or almost *instant* delight, which beauty, in its form of most powerful attraction, seems to beam on the very eye that gazes on it.

> "What sublimer pomp
> Adorns the seat, when virtue dwells on earth,
> And truth's eternal daylight shines around
> What palm belongs to man's imperial front,
> And woman powerful with becoming smiles!"*

* Pleasures of Imagination—2d form of the poem, B. I. v. 547—551.

In these cases, there are instant conceptions of dignity, or of gentleness, which we attach to the imperial front of man, or to the more powerful, and more truly imperial smiles of woman. What we term *expression*, is the suggestion of that general character of intelligence and virtue, which is said to be expressed,—not the necessary suggestion of many separate truths, nor the suggestion of many separate acts of kindness,—which may be suggested, indeed, if we continue long to contemplate the intelligent and benevolent form; but which are, in that case, subsequent to the emotion, that, in its origin at least, truly preceded them.

Such are the modes in which I conceive the *past*, in our emotion of beauty, to influence the *present*. But if all which the past presents to us, be the conceptions of former delight, how happens it, that these conceptions, which often pass along our mind in reverie, with only faint and shadowy pleasure, should be heightened to so much rapture, when suggested by some real object before us? The images suggested may afford the sources of the delight; but the delight itself must be in some way modified, before it is converted into *beauty*. There is another part of the process, then, which we have not yet considered, to which it is necessary to direct your attention.

What is truly most important to the emotion of beauty, is this very part of the process which theorists have yet neglected. It is not the mere suggestion of certain conceptions, general or particular, for these often form a part of our trains of thought, without any very lively feeling as their consequence. It is the fixing and embodying of these in a real object

before us, which gives to the whole, I conceive, one general impression of reality. This, I have little doubt, takes place, in the manner explained by me in former Lectures, when I treated of the peculiar influence of objects of *perception*, in giving liveliness to our trains of suggestion, and consequently greater liveliness to all the emotions which attend them. The delight of which we think, when images of the past arise, is very different from the delight which seems to be embodied in objects, and to meet our very glance, as the terror of the superstitious, when they think of a spectre in twilight, is very different from that which they feel, when their terror is incorporated in some shadowy form that gleams instinctively on their eye. But for a process of the kind which I have stated, I do not see how the effect of beauty, *as seen*, should be so very different as it most certainly is, from the effect produced by a long meditation on all those noble and gracious characters of virtue and intelligence,—the mere expression, that is to say, the mere suggestion of which is stated to be all which constitutes it. It is, in short, as I have said, this very part of the process which seems to me the most important in the whole theory of beauty.

The increased effect of that incorporating process, which I suppose, in the case of beauty, is, in truth, nothing more than what we have found to take place in all the cases of suggestion of vivid images, by objects of perception, rather than by our fainter and more fugitive conceptions. The reality of what is truly before us, gives reality to all the associate ima-

ges that blend and harmonize with it. We think of ancient Greece,—we tread on the soil of Athens or Sparta. Our emotion, which was before faint, is now one of the liveliest of which our soul is susceptible, because it is fixed and realized in the existing and present object. The same images arise to us, but they coexist now as they rise, with all the monuments which we behold, with the land itself, with the sound of those waves, which are dashing now, as they dashed so many ages before, when their murmur was heard by the heroes of whom we think,—all now lives before us, and when we behold a beautiful form, all the images suggested by it, live in like manner in it. It does not suggest to us what was once delightful, but it is itself *representative* of what was once delightful. The visions of other years exist again to our very eyes. We see embodied all which we feel in our mind; and the source of delight which is itself real, gives instant reality to the delight itself, and to all the harmonizing images that blend with it. We may, even in solitude, think with pleasure of the kindness of smiles and tones which we have loved; but when a smile of the same kind is beaming on us, or when we listen to similar tones, it is no longer a mere dream of happiness,—the whole seems one equal perception, and we are surrounded again, as it were, with all the vivid happiness of the past.

Though the result of our inquiry into original beauty, then, has led us to adopt the greater probability of some original susceptibilities of emotions of this sort, that are independent of the arbitrary asso-

ciations which must be formed in the progress of life, we have found sufficient reason to ascribe to this slow and silent growth of circumstances of adventitious delight, almost all the beauty which is worthy of the name:—and we have seen, I flatter myself, in what manner these circumstances operate in inducing the emotion. This happy effect, I have shewn, to be too instantaneous to be the result of a rapid review or suggestion of many particulars, in each separate case, but to depend on the combination with the objects which we term beautiful, of some instant complex feeling of past delight, or of those general notions of beauty and excellence, which themselves, indeed, originally resulted from the observation of particulars, but which afterwards are capable of being suggested as one feeling of the mind, like our other general notions of every species; and, when combined with objects really existing, or felt as if really existing, to derive from this impression of reality in the harmonizing objects with which they are mingled in our perception, a liveliness without which they could not have exercised their delightful dominion on our heart.

Such, I conceive, then, in the principles on which it depends, is that delightful dominion, which is exercised on our heart, not directly by mind only, but by the very forms of inanimate nature.

> "Hence the wide universe,
> Through all the seasons of revolving worlds,
> Bears witness with its people, gods and men,

To Beauty's blissful power, and, with the voice
Of grateful admiration, still resounds;—
That voice, to which is Beauty's frame divine,
As is the cunning of the master's hand
To the sweet accent of the well tuned lyre."*

* Pleasures of Imagination, second form of the poem, B. I. v. 682—689.

LECTURE LVII.

I. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS, NOT INVOLVING NECESSARILY ANY MORAL FEELING—3. BEAUTY AND ITS REVERSE, CONCLUDED—4. SUBLIMITY,—LIKE BEAUTY, A MERE FEELING OF THE MIND.—SOURCES OF SUBLIMITY.

For several Lectures, Gentlemen, we have been engaged in considering one of the most interesting of our emotions—an emotion connected with so many sources of delight, material, intellectual, and moral; that it is not wonderful that it should have attracted, in a very high degree, the attention of metaphysical inquirers, and should even have become a subject of slight study, with those lovers of easy reading, to whom the word *metaphysical* is a word of alarm, and who never think that they are studying *metaphysics*, when they are reading only of delicate forms and smiles, and graces. What they feel, in admiring beauty, is an emotion so very pleasing, that they connect some degree of pleasure with the very works that treat of it, and would perhaps be astonished to learn, that the inquiry into the nature of this emotion, which it would seem to them so strange

not to feel, is one of the most difficult inquiries in the whole philosophy of mind.

It may be of advantage, then, after an analytical investigation, which is in itself not very simple, and which has been so much confused by a multitude of opinions, to review once more, slightly, our progress and the results which we have obtained.

In whatever manner, the pleasing emotion itself may arise, and however simple or complex it may be, we term *beautiful*, the object by which it is excited. But though, philosophically, a beautiful object be considered by us merely as that which excites a certain delightful feeling in our mind, it is only *philosophically* that we thus separate completely the object from the delight which it affords. It is impossible for us to gaze on it, without reflecting on it this very delight, or even to think of it, without conceiving some spirit of delight diffused in it,—a never-fading pleasure, that, as if in independence of our perception, exists in it or floats around it, as much when no eye beholds it, as when it is the gaze and happiness of a thousand eyes.

Such in its reflection from our mind, on the object that seems to embody it, is the beauty which we truly feel; and if the objects that excite it, were uniformly the same in all mankind, little more would have remained for inquiry. But, far from being uniform in its causes, in all mankind, the emotion is not uniform in a single individual, for a single year, or even, in the rapid changes of fashion, for a few months of a single year. These rapid changes, at once so universal and so capricious in their influence,

led us naturally to inquire, whether fashion, in all its arbitrary power, and other circumstances of casual association, peculiar to individual minds, be not the modifiers only, but perhaps the very *sources* of all those emotions which seem to vary with their slightest varieties.

In this inquiry, which, from the peculiar circumstance in which alone it is in our power to enter on it, cannot afford absolute certainty of result, but only such a result as a comparison of greater and less probabilities affords, we were led, on such a comparison, to a conclusion *favourable* to the supposition, that the mind has *some* original tendencies to receive impressions of beauty, from certain objects, rather than from others, though it has, without all question, at the same time, other tendencies, which may produce feelings inconsistent with the pleasing emotion, that otherwise would have attended the contemplation of those objects, or sufficient of themselves to constitute the pleasing emotion, in cases in which there was no original tendency to feel it,—that what is *beauty*, therefore, at one period of life, or, in one age or country, even in cases in which there may have been an original tendency to feel it, may *not* be *beauty*, at another period of life, or in another age or country, from the mere difference of the arbitrary circumstances, which have variously modified the original tendency, in the same manner as we find circumstances capable of modifying, or even reversing other species of emotions,—this difference of result being, not of itself, a proof of the *unreality* of all original *distinctions of this sort*, more than the prejudices

and delusions of mankind, and their varying desires, are a proof, that truth and error are themselves indifferent, and all things originally equally desirable. It is like the descent of one of the scales of a balance, from which alone it would be absurd to conclude, that the *whole* weight is in that single scale. The descent may have arisen only from the preponderance of a *greater* weight over a less, when, but for the addition of some new substance thrown into it, the sinking scale would have arisen, and the other scale have obeyed that natural tendency, which, of itself, would have directed its motion to the earth.

The error of those who ascribe to the suggestion of *mental qualities*, the whole emotion of beauty, in every case, *corporeal* as well as *mental*, we found to be, very probably, occasioned, in part at least, by the very nature of the laws on which suggestion depends, —analogous objects *suggesting* analogous objects,— and corporeal qualities thus suggesting the very striking analogies of mind, in the same way as these mutually suggest each other,—analogies which are pleasing in themselves, and may, *when suggested*, mingle their own pleasure with the delightful emotion previously excited by the corporeal object. But it is very evident, that the suggestion of the mental quality may, in this case, be the *effect*, or the mere concomitant, not the cause, of that delightful emotion, which was itself, perhaps, the very circumstance that led us to dwell on the external object, till the analogy was suggested; and, though no suggestion of this kind had taken place, the object might still have been felt by us as *beautiful*. The same remark

may be applied to all the other forms of association, as much as to the suggestions of mere analogy. These may coexist with the emotion, and may add to it their own mingled delight; but they are not, therefore, proved to be essential to it, in all its degrees. On the contrary, in many cases, it may be only because we have previously felt an object to be *beautiful*, that it suggests to us various objects of former similar delights,—the delightful effect itself, when produced, being the very principle of analogy which alone may have connected the one object with the other.

Association, however, whether as primarily giving rise to the emotion of beauty, in certain cases, or as modifying it in others, is, without all doubt, the source of the most important pleasure of this kind which we feel. But how does this association act? Is it, as is commonly supposed, by the suggestion of a number of images related to the object, that transfer to it, as it were, the emotions which originally belonged to *them*?

This opinion, though supported and illustrated by genius of a very high order, we found, notwithstanding, by reflection on all which we feel during our admiration of beauty, to be little warranted by the phenomena. Such a train of images passing through the mind,—and images accompanied with lively emotion, could scarcely fail to be remembered by us; or, at least, if they are not remembered by us, there is no reason, *à priori*, to suppose the existence of them. Yet we surely feel the charm of external loveliness without any consciousness of such trains. The very moment in which we have fixed our eye on a beau-

tiful countenance, or at least with an interval after our first perception, so short, as to be absolutely undistinguished by us; we feel, with instant delight, that the countenance *is* beautiful,—and the more beautiful the object, the *more*, not the *less*, does it *fix* the mind, as if *absorbed*, in the direct contemplation and enjoyment of it; and the *less*, therefore, in such a case, do we wander over the trains of images, on which the very feeling of beauty, is, in this theory, said to depend.

It is not a *number* of images, then, which necessarily arise in the mind,—though these *may* arise, and when they arise, may increase the pleasure that was felt before. What is suggested in the instant feeling of loveliness, must itself be an instant feeling of delight; and the source of such instant delight, we found accordingly in the common laws of suggestion, that have been already so fully considered by us. The perception of an object has originally coexisted with a certain pleasure,—a pleasure, which may perhaps have frequently recurred together with the perception,—and which thus forms with it in the mind one complex feeling, that is instantly recalled by the mere perception of the *object* in its subsequent recurrences. With this complex state, so recalled, other accidental pleasures may afterwards coexist in like manner, and form a more complex delight; but a delight, which is still, when felt, *one* momentary state of mind, and, as one state of mind, capable of being instantly recalled by the perception of the object, as much as the simpler delight in the earlier stage. The embellishing influence of asso-

ciation may thus be progressive in various stages; because new accessions of pleasure are continually rendering more complex the delight, that is afterwards to be suggested;—but that which is suggested in the later stages, though the result of a progress, is itself, in each subsequent perception of the object which it embellishes, *immediate*. We spread the charm over the object, with the same rapidity, with which we spread over it the colours, which it seems to beam on us.

Such is the great source of all the embellishments of beauty, when association operates, by the direct suggestion of an amount of delight associated with the particular object. But though our estimate of degrees of beauty, if wholly dependent on associations peculiar to the object, might seem scarcely capable of any precision, we yet form our estimate with a precision and uniformity, which almost resemble the exactness of our measurements of qualities, that do not depend on any arbitrary and capricious principle. There must, therefore, be in the mind some scale, in whatever way it may be acquired, by which we correct, in part at least, these accidental irregularities. This intellectual scale we found to be the result of the comparisons, which a cultivated mind is continually making; or of those general notions of resemblance which rise to us, when there has been no *intentional* comparison of object with object. We observe, not merely what gives delight to ourselves, but what gives delight also to the greater number of the cultivated minds around us; and what might be

capricious in *one* mind, is thus tempered by the result of more general associations in the many. As we form various notions of *brightness* from many varieties of light,—various notions of *magnitude* from many forms and proportions,—various notions of *pleasure* from many agreeable feelings,—so do we form, from the contemplation of many objects, that have excited certain pleasing emotions in ourselves and others, various notions of beauty, which, in their various degrees, are suggested by the new objects that are similar to those, which originally induced them; and many comparisons, in various circumstances, thus gradually rectifying what might have seemed capricious, if the comparisons had been fewer, we learn at last to attach certain notions of beauty to certain objects, with a precision which otherwise we should have been incapable of attaining. The mind becomes rich with many varieties of the general feeling of beauty,—a feeling that was the result of many particular images and emotions in ourselves, and of much observation of the similar impressions of others; but which is itself *one state* of mind, and capable, as one state of mind, of being suggested in constant sequence. From the multitude of former pleasing objects that have interested us, we have formed, in consequence of their felt resemblance,—as it was impossible for us, with our power of feeling resemblance, *not* to form,—a general notion of beauty or excellence; or rather, we have formed progressively various general notions of various species and degrees of beauty and excellence; and these general notions are readily suggested by the objects which

agree with them, precisely in the same way as our other general notions,—such, for example, as those expressed by the words, *flower*, *bird*, *quadruped*, when once formed in the mind, are afterwards readily suggested by any new object that seems referable to the species or genus.

It is not enough, however, when we gaze on a beautiful object, that certain conceptions of former delight should be suggested, for these rise equally, on innumerable occasions, in our trains of thought, with little liveliness of present joy. The distinguishing liveliness of the emotion of beauty, as it lives before us, seems to me, if it depend on association, to be absolutely inexplicable, but for a process, which we considered fully, when the general phenomena of suggestion were under our review;—the process, which, when the images of a train are connected, not with some former conception only, but with a real object of perception, invests with illusive present existence the whole kindred images of the harmonizing group, of which a part, and an important part, is truly recognized as existing.

The countenance on which we gaze recalls to us some *complex feeling of beauty*, that was previously formed; but, while it recalls it, it exists permanently before us; and, embodying as it were this complex visionary delight in the object of our continued perception, we give a reality, that is in the *object only*, to the *shadowy whole*, of which the perception of the object, and the associate feelings of suggestion, are harmonizing parts; and the images

of tenderness and joy, which, as mere conceptions, unembodied in any real object, might have passed through the mind in its trains of reverie, with little pleasure, thus fixed, as it were, and living before us in the external loveliness, affect us with a delight that is more than mere imagination, because the object of it seems to be as truly existing without, as any other permanent object of our senses,—a delight that may have resulted from many former pleasures, but that is itself one concentrated joy.

In all our inquiries on this subject, we have had regard, as you may have remarked, to many feelings of the mind, and not to one simple quality of objects that can be termed *the beautiful*, for the beautiful exists no where, more than the *soft*, or the *sweet*, or the *pleasing*; and to *inquire* into *the beautiful*, therefore, if it have any accurate meaning, is not to inquire into any circumstance which runs through a multitude of our emotions, but merely to inquire what *number* of our agreeable emotions have a sufficient similarity to be classed together under one general name.

Beauty is not anything that exists in objects independently of the mind which perceives them, and permanent therefore, as the objects in which it is falsely supposed to exist. It is an emotion of the mind, varying, therefore, like all our other emotions, with the varying tendencies of the mind, in different circumstances. We have not to inquire into the nature of any *fixed essence* which can be called the *beautiful*,—τὸ καλὸν,—but into the nature of transient

feelings, excited by objects which may agree in no respect, *but as they excite emotions in some degree similar.* What we term the *emotion* of beauty, is not *one* feeling of our mind, but *many feelings*, that have a certain similarity, as *greenness*, *redness*, *blueness*, are all designated by the general name *colour*. There is not *one beauty*, more than there is *one colour* or *one form*. But there are various beauties—that is to say, various pleasing emotions, that have a certain resemblance, in consequence of which we class them together. *The beautiful* exists no more in objects, than *species* or *genera* exist in *individuals*. It is, in truth, a species or genus—a mere general term, expressive of similarity in various pleasing feelings. Yet even those writers, who would be astonished, if we were to regard them, as capable of any faith in the universal *à parte rei*, believe this *universal beauty à parte rei*, and inquire, what it is which constitutes *the beautiful*, very much in the same way, as the scholastic logicians inquired into the *real essence* of the universal.

By some, accordingly, beauty is said to be a waving line, by others, a combination of certain physical qualities—by others, the mere expression of qualities of mind, and by fifty writers, almost as many different things,—as if *beauty* were *anything* in *itself*, and were not merely a general name, for all those pleasing emotions, which *forms*, *colours*, *sounds*, *motions*, and *intellectual and moral aspects of the mind* produce,—emotions, that have a *resemblance*, indeed, but are far from being the *same*.

They are *similar*, only as all the feelings of the mind, to which we give the name of *pleasure*, have a certain *similarity*, in consequence of which we give them that common name, though there is nothing which can be called *pleasure*, distinct from these separate agreeable feelings.

What is it which constitutes the *pleasing?* would be generally counted a very singular inquiry; and to say that it is a *sight*, or a *smell*, or a *taste*,—the *brilliant*, or the *sweet*, or the *spicy*, or the *soft*, would be counted a theory *still more* singular than the enquiry which led to it. Yet no one is surprised when we enquire what it is which constitutes *the beautiful;* and we are scarcely surprised at the attempts of those who would persuade us, that *all our emotions*, to which we give that name, are only one, or a few of these very emotions.

Various *forms*, *colours*, *sounds*, are beautiful,—various results of intellectual composition are beautiful,—various moral affections, when contemplated by the mind, are attended with a similar feeling. But we are not to suppose, because there may be a considerable *similarity* of the emotions excited by these different classes of objects, that *any one* of the classes comprehends the others, more than colours, which are pleasing, comprehend pleasing odours, or tastes, or these respectively each other. A circle or a melody, a song or a theorem, an act of gratitude or generous forbearance, are all *beautiful*, as *greenness*, *sweetness*, *fragrance*, are *pleasing*; and *the pleasing* exists as truly as *the beautiful*, and is as fit an object of philosophic investigation.

After these remarks on beauty, it is unnecessary to make any remarks on the opposite emotion,—the same observations, as to their nature, and the circumstances that produce or modify them, being equally applicable to both. As certain *forms, colours, sounds, motions, works of art,* and *moral affections,* are contemplated with delight,—the contemplation of certain other *forms, colours, sounds, motions, works of art,* and *affections of our moral nature,* is attended with a *disagreeable emotion.* I have also remarked, that for this opposite emotion, *in its full extent,* we have no adequate name;—*deformity,* and even *ugliness,*—which is a more general word,—being usually applied only to *external things,* and not to the *intellectual* or *moral* objects of our thought; as we apply *beauty* alike to *all.* There can be no doubt, however, that the same analogy, which connects our various emotions of beauty, *sensitive, intellectual,* and *moral,* exists equally, in the emotions of this opposite class; and that, though we are not accustomed to speak of *the ugly,* and to inquire into *what constitutes it,* as we have been accustomed to inquire into *the beautiful,* and its supposed *constituents,* it is only because *beauty* is the *more attractive,* and the empire which *itself* possesses, is possessed, in some measure, by its very *name.*

After the attention which we have paid to the emotions, that are usually classed together, under the general name of *beauty,*—the emotions, to the consideration of which we have next to proceed, are

those which constitute our feelings of *sublimity*. On these, however, it will not be necessary to dwell at any great length; since you will be able, of yourselves, to apply to them many of the remarks, that were suggested by the consideration of the former species of emotion.

The feeling of *sublimity*, it may well be supposed, does not arise *without a cause*, more than our feeling of *beauty*; but the *sublimity* which we *feel*, like the *beauty* which we *feel*, is an affection of our *mind*, not a quality of *any thing external*. It is a feeling, however, which, like the feeling of beauty, we *reflect back* on the object that excited it, as if it truly formed a *part* of the object; and thus, instead of being merely the *unknown cause* of our emotion, —as when it is philosophically viewed,—the object which impresses itself on our *mind*, and almost on our *senses*, as *sublime*, is felt by us, as *our own embodied emotion*,—mingled, indeed, with other qualities that are material, but diffused in them, with an existence that seems independent of our temporary feeling.

When Dryden said, of one of our most powerful and most delightful passions,—

> "The cause of love can never be assign'd;
> 'Tis in no face, but in the lover's mind,"

he probably was not aware, that he was saying what was not *poetically* only, but *philosophically* true, though in a sense different from that which he meant

to convey. It is not the capricious passion alone which the lover feels, as in himself, but the very beauty that is felt by him in the external object, which is as truly an emotion of his own mind as the passion to which it may have given rise. Of all those forms, on which we gaze with a delight that is never weary, because the pleasure which we *have* felt, as reflected by us to the object, is to us almost a source of the pleasure which we *feel* at the moment, or are *about to feel*,—what, I have asked, would the loveliest be, but for the eyes which gaze on it, and which give it all its charms, as they give it the very *unity* that converts it into the form which we behold? *A multitude of separate and independent atoms*,—we found ourselves obliged to answer,—*and nothing more*. In like manner, I might ask, what, but for the mind which is impressed with the sublimity, would be the *precipice*, the *cataract*, the *ocean*, the whole system of worlds, that seem at once to fill the immensity of space, and yet to leave on our conception an infinity, which even worlds without number could not fill? To these, too, sublime as they are felt by us to be, it is our mind alone, which gives at once all the unity and sublimity, which they seem to us to possess, as of their own nature. They are, in truth, only a number of atoms, that would be precisely the same in themselves, whether existing near to each other, or at distances the most remote. But it is impossible for us, to regard them *merely as a number of atoms*; because they affect us *with one complex emotion*, which we diffuse over them all.

When precipice hangs over precipice, and we shrink back on our perilous height, as we strive to look down from the cliff on the abyss beneath,—in which we rather *hear* the torrent, than see it, with our shuddering and dazzled eye,—we have one vivid, though complicated feeling, which fills our whole soul; and the whole objects existing separately before us, are *one vast and terrifying image* of all that is within us. In the hurricane that lays waste, and almost annihilates whatever it meets, there is to our conception *something more* than the mere particles of air that form each successive blast. We animate it with our own feelings. It is not a cause of terror only,—it is terror itself. It seems to bear about with it that *awful sublimity*, of which we are conscious,—an emotion, that as it animates our corporeal frame with one expansive feeling, seems to give a sort of *dreadful unity* to the whole thunders of the tempest, or rather to form one mighty being of the whole minute elements, that when they rage, impelling and impelled, in the tumultuous atmosphere, are merely congregated, by accidental vicinity, as they exist equally together in the gentlest breeze, or in the stillness of the summer sky.

That *sublimity* should be *reflected* to the object from the mind, *like beauty*, is not wonderful; since, in truth, what we term *beauty*, and *sublimity*, are not *opposite*, but, in the greater number of cases, are merely *different parts* of a *series of emotions*. I have already, in treating of *beauty*, pointed out to you the error into which the common language of philosophers might be very apt to lead you,—the

error of supposing, that *beauty* is *one emotion*, merely because we have invented that *generic or specific name*, which comprehends at once many agreeable emotions; that have some *resemblance*, indeed, as being agreeable, and diffused, as it were, or concentrated in their objects, and are therefore *classed together*, but still are far from being *the same*. *The beautiful*, concerning which philosophers have been at so much pains in their enquiries, is, as we have seen, in the mode in which they conceive it to exist, a sort of *real essence*,—an universal *à parte rei*, which has retained its hold of the belief when other *universals of this kind*, not *less real*, had been suffered to retain a place, only in the insignificant vocabulary of scholastic logic.

Our emotions of *beauty*, I have said, are *various*; and, as they gradually rise, from object to object, a sort of regular progression may be traced from the *faintest beauty*, to the *vastest sublimity*. These extremes may be considered as *united*, by a class of intermediate feelings, for which *grandeur* might, perhaps, be a suitable term, that have more of *beauty*, or more of *sublimity*, according to their place in the scale of emotion. I have retained, however, the common twofold division of beauty and sublimity, not as thinking that there may not be intermediate feelings, which scarcely admit of being very suitably classed under either of these names, but because the same general reasoning must be applicable to all these states of mind, whatever names, or number of names, may be given to the varieties that fill up the

intervening space. Indeed, if all the various emotions, to which, in their objects, we attach the single name of *beautiful*, were attentively considered, we might find reason to form, of this single order, many subdivisions, with their appropriate terms; but this precision of *minute nomenclature*, in such a case, is of less importance, if you know sufficiently the general fact involved in it,—that there is not *one beauty*, or *one sublimity*, but *various feelings*, to which, in their objects, we give the name of *beauty*, and various *feelings*, to which, in their objects, we give the name of sublimity; and that there may be intermediate feelings, which differ from these, as these respectively differ from each other. That which happens, in innumerable *other* cases, has happened *in this case*; we have a series of many feelings; we have invented the names, *sublimity and beauty*, which we have attached to *certain parts* of this *series*; and, because we have invented the names, we think that the emotions which they designate, are *more* opposed to each other, than they seemed to us before. *One* feeling of beauty differs from *another* feeling of *beauty*; but they are *both* comprehended in the *same term*, and we forget the difference. *One* feeling *of sublimity* differs, in like manner, from *another* feeling of *sublimity*; but *they* also are both comprehended in *one term*, and their difference *too* is forgotten. It is not so, when we compare one emotion of *beauty* with another emotion of *sublimity*; the *feelings* are then not merely *different*, but they are *expressed by a different term*; and their *opposition* is thus *doubly*

forced upon us. If we had not invented any terms whatever, we should have seen, as it were, a *series of emotions*, all shadowing into each other, with differences of tint, more or less *strong, and rapidly distinguishable.* The invention of the terms, however, is like the intersection of the series, at certain places, with a few well-marked lines. The shadowing may still, in itself, be equally gradual; but we think of the *sections* only, and perceive a peculiar resemblance in the *parts comprehended in each*, as we think that we perceive a peculiar *diversity* at each bending line.

To be convinced how readily the feelings, contrasted as they may seem at last, have flowed into each other, let us take some example. Let us imagine that we see before us, a stream gently gliding through fields, rich with all the luxuriance of summer, overshadowed at times by the foliage that hangs over it, from bank to bank, and then suddenly sparkling in the open sunshine, as if with a still brighter current than before. Let us trace it, till it widen to a *majestic river*, of which the waters are the boundary of two flourishing empires, conveying abundance equally to each, while city succeeds city, on its populous shores, almost with the same rapidity as grove formerly succeeded grove. Let us next behold it, losing itself in the immensity of the ocean, which seems to be only an *expansion* of *itself*, when there is not an object to be seen but its own wild amplitude, between the *banks* which it leaves, and the sun that is setting, as if in another world, in the remote horizon;—in all this course, from the *brook*, which we

leap over, if it meet us in our way, to that boundless waste of waters, in which the power of man, that leaves some vestige of his existence in every thing else, is not able to leave one lasting impression,—which, after his fleets have passed along in all their pride, is, the very moment after, as if they had never been, and which bears or dashes those navies that are contending for the mastery of kingdoms, only as it bears or dashes the foam upon its waves,—if we were to *trace* and *contemplate* this whole continued progress, we should have a *series of emotions*, which might, at each moment, be similar to the *preceding* emotion, but which would become, at last, so different from our earliest feelings, that we should scarcely think of them as *feelings of one class*. The emotions which rose, when we regarded the *narrow stream*, would be those which we class as *emotions of beauty*. The *emotions* which rose, when we considered that infinity of waters, in which it was ultimately lost, would be of the kind which we denominate *sublimity;* and the grandeur of the river, while it was still distinguishable from the ocean, to which it was proceeding, might be viewed with feelings, to which some other name or names might, on the same principle of distinction, be given. This progressive series, we should see very distinctly, as *progressive*, if we had not invented the two general terms; but the invention of the terms, certainly, does not *alter* the nature of these feelings, which the *terms* are employed merely to *signify*.

Innumerable other examples,—from increasing

magnitude of dimensions, or increasing intensity of quality,—might be selected, in illustration of that species of *sublimity* which we feel in the contemplation of *external things*, as *progressively* rising from emotions that would be termed *emotions of beauty*, if they were considered alone. It is unnecessary, however, to *repeat*, with *other examples*, what is sufficiently evident, without any other illustration, from the case already instanced.

The same *progressive series* of feelings, which may thus be traced as we contemplate *works of nature*, is not less evident in the contemplation of works of *human* art, whether that art have been employed in material things, or be purely intellectual. From the *cottage* to the *cathedral*—from the simplest *ballad air*, to the harmony of a *choral anthem*—from a *pastoral*, to an *epic poem*, or a *tragedy*—from a landscape, or a sculptured Cupid, to a Cartoon, or the Laocoon—from a single experiment in chemistry, to the elucidation of the whole system of chemical affinities, which regulate all the changes on the surface of our globe—from a simple theorem, to the principia of Newton :—In all those cases in which I have merely stated what is *beautiful* and what is *sublime*, and left a *wide space between*, it is easy for your imagination to fill up the interval; and you cannot fill up this interval without perceiving, that, merely by adding what seemed degree after degree, you arrive at last at emotions, which have little apparent resemblance to the emotions with which the scale began. It is, as in the thermometric scale; by adding

one portion of caloric after another, we rise at last, after no very long progress, from the *cold* of *freezing*, to the *heat* at which water *boils*; though our *feelings*, at these two points, are as different as if they had arisen from causes that had no resemblance;—certainly *as different* as our emotions of *sublimity* and *beauty*.

In the moral scene, the progression is equally evident. By adding virtue to virtue, or circumstance to circumstance in the exercise of any virtue, we rise from what is merely *beautiful* to what is *sublime*. Let us suppose, for example, that in the famine of an army, a soldier divides his scanty allowance with one of his comrades, whose health is sinking under the privation. We feel, in the contemplation of this action, a pleasure, which is that of moral beauty. In proportion as we imagine the *famine* of longer duration, or the prospect of relief *less probable*, the action becomes *more and more* morally *grand* or *heroic*. Let us next imagine, that the comrade, to whose relief the soldier makes this generous sacrifice, is one whose enmity he has formerly experienced on some interesting occasion; and the action is not *heroic* merely, it is *sublime*. There is not a virtue, even of the most tranquil or gentle sort, which we may not, in like manner, render sublime, by varying the circumstance in which it is exercised; and by varying these *gradually*, we pass through a series of emotions, any two of which may be regarded as not very dissimilar; though the *extremes*, when considered without the parts of the

series which connect them, may scarcely have even the slightest similarity.

When I speak of this *progression of our feelings*, by which emotion after emotion may rise, from the faintest of those which we refer to *beauty*, to the most *overwhelming* of those which we term *sublime*, I am far from wishing you to think that such a *progress* is in all cases *necessary* to the *emotion*; I allude to it merely for the purpose of shewing, that sublimity is not, by its nature, of a *class of feelings essentially* different from beauty; and that we may, therefore, very readily conceive, that the laws which we have found applicable to *beauty* may be applicable to *it* also.

So far is it, indeed, from being indispensible to *sublimity*, that *beauty* should be the characteristic of the *same circumstance*, in a *less degree*, that, in many instances, what is absolutely the *reverse of beautiful*, becomes sublime, by the exclusion of everything which could excite of itself that delightful but gentle emotion. A slight degree of barren dreariness in any country through which we travel, produces only feelings that are disagreeable; a wide extent of desolation, when the eye can see no verdure as far as it can reach, but only rocks that rise at irregular intervals, through the sandy waste, has a sort of savage sublimity, which we almost delight to contemplate. In the moral world, the audacity of guilt cannot seem *beautiful* to us in any of its degrees; but it may excite in us, when it is of more than ordinary atrocity, that species of emotion

which we are now considering. Who is there who can love Medea as she is represented to us in the ancient story? But to whom is she not *sublime*? It is not in Marius, that we would look for a model of moral beauty; but what form is there, which the painter would feel more internal sublimity in designing, than that bloodthirsty chief, sitting amid the ruins of Carthage, when, as a Roman poet, by a bold rhetorical figure, says, of the memorable scene, and the memorable outcast whom it sheltered, each was to the other a consolation, and equally afflicted and overwhelmed together, they forgave the gods,—

> "Non ille favore
> Numinis, ingenti superum protectus ab irâ,
> Vir ferus, et Romam cupienti perdere fato
> Sufficiens. Idem pelago delatus iniquo,
> Hostilem in terram, vacuisque, mapalibus actus,
> Nuda triumphati jacuit per regna Jugurthæ,
> Et Pœnos pressit cineres; solatia fati,
> Carthago, Mariusque, tulit; pariterque jacentes,
> Ignovêre Deis." *

An old French opera, of which d'Alembert speaks, on the horrible story of Atreus and Thyestes, that story on which, as on other horrible stories of the kind, the ancients were so strangely fond of dwelling, in preference, and almost to the exclusion of more interesting pathos, concludes, after the banquet, with the vengeance of the gods on the contriver of the

* Lucan, Pharsalia, lib. ii. v. 85—93.

dreadful feast; and amidst the bolts that are falling around him on every side, Atreus cries out, as if exulting, "Thunder, ye *powerless* gods, I am avenged." To *lessen* that triumphant revenge, which is so sublime in this case, would be not to produce an emotion of beauty, but to produce that *disgust* and *contempt*, which we feel for petty malice. I need not allude to the multitude of other cases, to which the same remark would be equally applicable.

Whether, then, the emotions be, or be not, of a kind which may be gradual, by the omission of some circumstance, or the diminution of the vivid feeling itself, lessened down to that emotion, which we ascribe to mere beauty, it is not the less sublime, if it truly involves that species of vivid feeling, which we distinguish, with sufficient readiness, from the gentle delight of beauty, as we distinguish the sensation of a burn from that of gentle warmth, without being able to state, in words, in what *circumstance*, or *circumstances*, the difference of the feelings consists. It is the *vain attempt* to *define* what cannot be defined, that has led to all the errors and supposed mysteries, in the *theory of sublimity*, as it has led to *similar errors* in the *theory of beauty*. Sublimity is not *one emotion*, but *various emotions*, that have a certain resemblance,—the *sublime* in itself is *nothing*; or at least, it is only a mere name, indicative of our feeling of the resemblance of certain affections of our mind, excited by objects, material or mental, that agree, perhaps, in no other circumstance, but in that analogous undefinable emotion which they excite.

Whatever is vast, in the material world—whatever is supremely comprehensive in intellect—whatever in morals implies virtuous affections or passions far beyond the ordinary level of humanity, or even *guilt*, that is ennobled, in some measure, by the fearlessness of its daring, or the magnitude of the ends, to which it has had the boldness to aspire—these, and various other objects, in mind and matter, produce certain vivid feelings, which are so *similar* as to be *classed together*; and, if we speak of sublimity, merely in reference to the various objects which excite these analogous feelings, so as to make the enumeration of the objects a sort of definition of the species of emotion itself, there can be no risk of mistake, more than in saying, that *sweetness* is a word expressive of *those sensations*, which *sugar*, *honey*, and various other substitutes that might be named, excite. But, if we attempt to define *sweetness itself* as a *sensation*, or *sublimity itself* as an *emotion*, we either state what is absolutely *nugatory*, or what is still more probably false in its *general* extent, however *partially true*; because our attention, in our definition, will be given to some *particular emotions* of the class, not to anything common to the class, since there is truly no common circumstance, which words can adequately express. Hence it happens, that by this singling out of particular objects, we have many *theories of sublimity*, as we have of *beauty*; all of them founded on the supposition of an *universal sublimity à parte rei*, as the theories of *beauty* were founded on an *universal beauty à parte rei*,

Sublimity, says one writer, is the terrible—according to another writer, it is magnitude or amplitude, which is essential to the emotion—according to another, it is *mighty force* or *power*—according to another, it is the mere suggestion of images of feelings, *directly* connected with that *elevation in place*, which has given sublimity its name—according to another, it arises from a wider range of associations, all, however, centering in some prior affections of the *mind*, as their direct source. It is very true, that *terror*, *vastness of size*, extraordinary force, high elevation, and various associate images, *do* produce feelings of sublimity; but it is not equally true, that any *one* of these feelings is itself *all the other feelings*. Great elevation, for example, may excite in me the emotion to which it has given the distinctive name, and it is even possible, that many great virtues, may, by a sort of poetic analogy, suggest the notion of *local elevation*, as snow suggests the notion of spotless innocence, or the shadow that follows any brilliant object, the notion of envy pursuing merit. But even though, in thinking of heroic virtue, the analogy of *local elevation* were excited,—which it surely is only in very rare cases,—this would be no reason for believing, that the heroic virtue itself is incapable of exciting emotion, *till* it have *previously* suggested *height*, and the feelings associated with height. It is the same with magnitude or power; they are *causes* of *sublime feelings*, not *causes* of *the sublime*,—which has no real existence,—nor of those *other* sublime feelings, which have no direct relation to magnitude or power. Power

itself, for example, is not magnitude; nor *magnitude power*. The contemplation of *eternity* or *infinity* of *space*, is instantly, and of itself, as a mere object of thought, productive of this emotion, without any regard to my power of conceiving infinity, which may, indeed, be a *subsequent* cause of astonishment, but which certainly does not *precede the emotion* as its *cause*. In like manner, any great energy of mind, either in *acting* or *bearing*, though it may suggest, by analogy, *magnitude*, as it may suggest many other analogies, does not depend, for the emotion which it excites, on the *previous* suggestion of the *analogous* amplitude of size. The two primary errors, as I have already said, in all these various theories, which may be considered as confutations of each other, consist in supposing, first, that sublimity is one,—*the sublime*, to use the language of theory,—which, therefore, as suggested by one object, may be precisely the same with the emotion suggested by other objects; and, secondly, the belief, that because certain objects have an analogy, so as to be capable, by the mere laws of association, of suggesting each other, they, therefore, do uniformly suggest each other, and excite emotion only in this way,—that because any generous sacrifice, for instance, *may* suggest the notion of magnitude or elevation in place,—which, if it suggest them at all, it suggests only rarely,—it, therefore, *must* at all times suggest them,—as if it were absolutely impossible for us to see an object, without thinking of any analogous object,—to look on snow, without

thinking of innocence, or on a shadow, without thinking of envy.

I trust, after the remarks already made, that it is unnecessary for me, to repeat any arguments in confutation of the error, as to one universal *sublime*,—an error of precisely the same kind, as that which would contend, that, because the *fragrance of a violet*, and the *simplicity of a comprehensive theorem*, are both *pleasing*, the *theorem* comprehends the *fragrance*, or the *fragrance* the mathematical demonstration. As there are many pleasures, excited by many objects, but not *the pleasing*,—many emotions of beauty, excited by many objects, but not *the beautiful*;—so are there many emotions of sublimity, excited by many objects, but not *the sublime*. The emotion, which I feel, when I think of *all the ages of eternity*, that, however indefinitely multiplied, are as nothing to the ages that still remain,—that which I feel, when I think of a night of tempest on the ocean, when no light is to be seen, but the flash of guns of distress from some half-wrecked vessel; or the still more dreadful light from the clouds above, that gleams only to shew the billows bursting over their prey, and nothing to be heard but the shriek that rises loudest, at the very moment, when it is lost at last, and for ever, in one continued howl and dashing of the storm and the surge,—these feelings, though both classed as *sublime*, and having some resemblance, which leads to this classification, are yet, in their most important

respects, very different *from each other;* and how different are they *both,* from the emotion, with which I regard some moral sublimity,—the memorable action of Arria, when she presented the dagger to her lord,—or the more tranquil happiness of the *elder* Pœtus, when, on being ordered by the tyrant to death, —as in the accustomed rites of some grateful sacrifice,—he sprinkled his blood as a libation, to *Jove the deliverer!* It is in the moral conduct of our fellow men, that the *species* of sublimity is to be found, which we *most gladly* recognize, as the character of that glorious nature, which we have received from God,—a character, which makes us more erect in mind, than we are in stature, and enables us, not to *gaze* on the heavens merely, but to lift to them our very wishes, and to imitate in some faint degree, and to admire at least, where we cannot imitate, the gracious perfection that dwells there. It is to *mind,* therefore, that we turn, even from the sublimest wonders of magnificence, which the material universe exhibits.

"Look then abroad through Nature, to the range
Of planets, suns, and adamantine spheres,
Wheeling unshaken through the void immense;
And speak, O man, does this capacious scene,
With half that kindling majesty, dilate
Thy strong conception, as when Brutus rose
Refulgent from the stroke of Cæsar's fate,
Amid the crowd of patriots!—and his arm
Aloft extending, like eternal Jove,
When Guilt brings down the thunder, call'd aloud
On Tully's name, and shook his crimson steel,

And bade the father of his country, hail!
For, lo! the tyrant prostrate on the dust,
And Rome again is free."*

Yet, though *mind* exhibits the sublimities, on which we love *most* to dwell, we must not, on that account, suppose, that material objects are incapable of exciting any kindred feeling;—that, but for the accident of some mental association, the immensity of space would be considered by us with the same indifference as a single atom;—or the whole tempest of surges, in the seemingly boundless world of waters, with as little emotion, as the shallow pool that may chance to be dimpling before our eyes.

The remarks, which I made on *beauty*, might, however, of themselves, have been sufficient to save you from this mistake; and, indeed, after those remarks, it was, perhaps, superfluous in me, to repeat, in the case of sublimity, any part of the argument, which I employed on the former occasion. The further applications of it, which I have *not* made, you can have no difficulty in making for yourselves.

* Pleasures of Imagination, B. I. v. 487—500.

LECTURE LVIII.

I. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS, NOT NECESSARILY INVOLVING ANY MORAL FEELING.—RETROSPECT OF THE DISCUSSION OF THE EMOTIONS OF BEAUTY AND SUBLIMITY.—4. LUDICROUSNESS, THE OPPOSITE OF SUBLIMITY.—SOURCES OF THE LUDICROUS.—HOBBES' THEORY ERRONEOUS.—LUDICROUSNESS ARISES FROM UNEXPECTED CONGRUITIES OR INCONGRUITIES IN LANGUAGE—IN THOUGHT—OR IN OBJECTS OF PERCEPTION.—EXCEPTIONS.

GENTLEMEN, after the remarks which I had made on the varieties of the emotion of beauty, it was not necessary for me to dwell at so much length on the kindred emotions of *sublimity*, to the elucidation of which, I proceeded in my last Lecture;—the principal inquiries which had engaged us, with respect to the nature of beauty, being only another *form* of inquiries, which we might have pursued, indeed, in like manner, in the case of sublimity, but which it would have been tedious and profitless to repeat.

Opposed as the *sublime* and *beautiful* usually are, by a sort of antithetic arrangement, in our works of

rhetoric, or of the philosophy of taste, they are far from being *essentially* distinct, but, at least in the greater number of instances, shadow into each other; the sublime, in these cases, being only one portion of a series of feelings, of which *the beautiful*, as it has been termed, is also a part. The emotions of sublimity may, indeed, be excited by objects, which no diminution of the attendant circumstances, or of intensity of quality, could render beautiful, but which, on the contrary, when thus diminished, are disgusting or ridiculous, rather than agreeable. Yet, though there are, unquestionably, cases of this sort; as when guilt becomes sublime by the very atrocity with which it dares, and executes what other bosoms might shudder even to conceive,—or the mean wretchedness of some sterile waste acquires a kind of dignity from extent of that very desolation, which, in a less degree, made it meanly wretched, the greater number of cases are, as unquestionably, of a different sort;—in which, by gradual increase, or diminution of qualities, or alteration of the attendant circumstances, the emotion is progressively varied, till, by change after change, what was merely *beautiful*, becomes *grand*, and ultimately sublime,—the *extremes* seeming, perhaps, to have no resemblance, but this very difference of the extremes resulting only from the number of successive feelings in the long scale of emotion, in each sequence of which, compared with the feelings immediately preceding, there may have been shadowing of the closest resemblance. How very natural a process this is, I shew-

ed you, by examples of progressive beauty, grandeur, and sublimity, on different aspects, both of *matter*, and of *mind*.

Since beauty, then, by a gradual change of circumstances, can thus rise into sublimity, it is not wonderful that phenomena, which are parts of a series, should be, in many important respects, analogous; so that properties or relations, which are found to belong to one portion of the series, should be found to belong also to the other,—that, for example, as we diffuse, unconsciously, our delightful feeling of beauty, in the object which excites it, we should diffuse, in like manner, our feelings of sublimity in the objects, which we term sublime, and imagine some awful majesty to hang around them, even when there is no eye to behold them, and consequently no heart to be impressed with their overwhelming presence. The tendency, which this continued *incorporation* of our feeling in those sublime objects on which we gaze, or of which we think, produces, to the belief of a permanent sublimity in objects, may, very naturally, be supposed to flow into the illusion, which imagines the existence of something, that, *independently* of our feelings, is *common* to all the objects which thus powerfully impress us, and which may, of itself, be termed the *sublime*; as something common to all beautiful objects, independently of our feeling of their beauty, was, in like manner, imagined, and termed *the beautiful*. It was necessary for me, therefore, to expose the fallacy of these last lingering *universal essences* of the

schools, and to shew, that, as we have not *one* emotion of *beauty*, but a multitude of emotions, which, from their analogy, are comprehended under that one general term, so we have not one feeling of sublimity, but various analogous feelings, arising from various objects, that agree, perhaps, in no circumstance, but that of the analogous emotions which they excite.

Of feelings which are not the same, then, in every respect, it cannot surprise us, that we should not always find on analysis, the elements to be the same. Beauty, as we have seen, is an emotion of vivid delight, referred to the object which excites it; and sublimity, as we have also seen, in tracing the progressive emotion through gradual changes of circumstances, is often only this very beauty, united with a feeling of vague indefinable grandeur in its object, and a consequent impression of delightful astonishment, intermediate between mere admiration and awe. In relation to moral actions, it is often a combination of the pleasing emotion of beauty, with admiring astonishment and love, or respectful reverence. In many cases, however, there is no vivid delight of beauty intermingled in the compound feeling, but only astonishment, and a certain vague impression of unmeasurable greatness or power, which is more akin to terror, than to any emotion which can be said to be positively pleasurable. In some cases, indeed, there can be no question that images of terror contribute the chief elements of the emotion,—images, however, not of terror in that direct

form in which it assails us, when danger is close and imminent, but of terror softened either by distance as long past, or by mixed feelings of security, that fluctuate with it in rapid alternation, when the danger is only contingently or remotely possible. Different as the elements may be in many cases, and different as the resulting emotions may also be, the different results of the different elements may yet, as complex feelings, be sufficiently analogous to be classed under one rank of emotions; though, in giving one common name to the whole, we must always be aware, that it is only a certain analogy of the feelings which we mean to express, and not one common quality which can be considered as strictly the same in all,—and that it is not *the sublime*, therefore, which we are philosophically to seek, but the *sublimities*, if I may venture so to term them,—the various objects which, in various circumstances, excite emotions, that, in all their diversity, are yet of such resemblance, as to admit of being classed together, under one common appellation.

The species of emotion to which I am next to direct your attention, is that, which, in the common realism of the language of philosophers, is said to be occasioned by the *ludicrous*,—an emotion of light mirth, which may be considered as *opposite* to that of *sublimity*, though not opposite in the *strict sense*, in which *beauty* and *ugliness* are opposed. There are, indeed, *some* feelings of this kind, which may be said to arise from qualities that are truly the reverse of those on which *sublimity depends*, and in which,

accordingly, the opposition *is as complete* as that of *ugliness* and *beauty*. In the composition of works of fancy, for example, a mere *excess* or *diminution* of the very circumstances which renders a thought *sublime*, produces either *bombast* or *inanity*, and a consequent emotion of ridicule or gay contempt; as in the human countenance, an increase or diminution of any beautiful feature, may convert into deformity what was beauty before, and produce a corresponding change in our emotions. In this peculiar species of disproportion, when the sublime is intended, but when the images, from the inability of the author to produce and distinguish sublimity, are either overstrained or mean, consists what has been termed *bathos*, as rhetorically opposed to those peculiar emotions, to which, indeed, the very etymology of the term marks the opposition that has been felt.

Of the *ludicrousness*, which arises from this species of actual *opposition* of the mean or bombastic fancies of the writer *to the sublimity* which he wished to produce, it would, indeed, scarcely be necessary to say anything, after the remarks that have been made on *sublimity itself*, any more than it would be necessary to dwell on illustrations of *ugliness*, after a full discussion of the opposite emotions of beauty. But the gay mirthful feeling is not always of this kind. The same species of emotion, or an emotion very nearly similar, may be felt where there is no accompanying belief of *imperfection*, and where, on the contrary, as in the sprightly sallies of wit, a very high admiration is mixed with our feel-

ing of what is laughable,—an *admiration* which is much more than mere *astonishment*, and which, for the moment, though only for the moment, is perhaps as great as that, which, in our hours of reflection, we give to the highest efforts of meditative genius. It will therefore deserve a little fuller consideration, what the nature of the emotion is, or rather to state what is more within the power of philosophy, what are the circumstances in which the emotion arises.

Before entering on the minuter enquiry, however, I may remark, in the first place, that every theory which would make our feelings of this kind to depend on some modification of mere pride in a *comparison of ourselves and others*, to *our* advantage, and to the *disparagement, therefore, of the person supposed to be compared with us*, is founded on a false and very limited view of the phenomena; since the feeling is *as* strong, where there is the highest admiration of the wit of the speaker, and, consequently, where any comparison, like that which is supposed to be essential to the production of the emotion, would be to our disadvantage. It is in vain, for example, that Hobbes defines laughter to be "a sudden glory, arising from a sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves, by comparison with the infirmity of others, or with our own formerly,"—for we laugh as readily at some brilliant conception of wit, where there are no infirmities of others displayed, as where they are displayed in any awkward blunder. We often laugh, too, as this very definition, indeed, asserts, in thinking of *our own*

mistakes of this sort, when we surely cannot feel any great *glory*, nor any *eminence* in ourselves, more than if we had never been guilty of the mistake; the effect of our *discovery* of our *mistake* being merely to raise us to that level of ordinary excellence at which we imagined ourselves before;—not to raise us in the slightest degree above it. If the theory of Hobbes, or any theory, which converts our mere feeling of *ludicrousness* into a *proud comparison* of ourselves and others, were *just*, it would then follow, as has been objected to this theory, that a man who was very *self-conceited* and *supercilious*, would be *peculiarly* prone to *mirth*, when, on the contrary, it happens that *children*, and, if persons in advanced life, *those* whose temper is most *social*, are the most readily excited to *laughter*; while the proud, to whom their superiority most readily recurs, are usually very little disposed to merriment. "Seldom they smile," may be said of *them*, as was said of *Cassius*; and when they do smile, their smile, like his, so admirably described by Shakspeare, has little in it of the full *glorying* and *eminency* of *laughter*, but is

> "of such a sort,
> As if they mock'd themselves, and scorn'd their spirit,
> That could be moved to smile at anything."*

The mere *stupidity* of any one, when there is no vanity of pretension to contrast with it, does not make us laugh; yet if laughter arose from the mere

* Julius Cæsar.—Act I. Scene 2.

triumph of personal superiority, there would surely, in this case, be equal reason for selfish exultation; and a company of blockheads should be the gayest of all society. In any brilliant piece of wit, it is to the images or thought suggested, in ready eloquence, that we look, without regard to him who is its author; unless, indeed, in those cases in which the very character or situation of the speaker may of itself produce a sort of ludicrousness, by its incongruity with the gravity or levity of what is said. There is scarcely any thing which is *more* ludicrous than a happy parody; and though the author of the parody may be allowed to feel some triumph over the original author,—if even his playful metamorphose of what is dignified and excellent can be termed a *triumph*, which is rather an amusement than a victory;—this triumph certainly cannot be felt by the *mere hearers*, since their pleasure is always *greater* in proportion, not to the *infirmity* of which Hobbes speaks, but to the excellence of the original, without great merit in which, or supposed great merit, the parody itself could not be felt as having any claim to our laughter or our praise. A parody on any dull verses would, indeed, be still duller than the dullness which it ridicules.

It is not any *proud comparison*, therefore, which constitutes what is termed the ludicrous; but, even in the proudest of such comparisons, some other circumstance or circumstances. It is the combination of general incongruity with partial and unexpected congruity of the mere images themselves, which may indeed in some cases lead to this triumph as an

auxiliary pleasure, but which has an immediate and independent pleasure of its own—a pleasure arising from the discovery of unsuspected resemblance in objects formerly conceived to be known to us, or unsuspected difference in objects formerly regarded as highly similar.

Nothing is felt as truly ludicrous in which there is not an unexpected congruity developed in images that were before supposed to be opposite in kind, or some equally unexpected incongruity in images supposed to be congruous; and the sudden perception of these discrepancies and agreements may be said to be that which constitutes the ludicrousness; the gay emotions being immediately subsequent to the mere perception of the unexpected relation.

The congruities and incongruities, which give rise to this emotion, may be either in mere language, or in the thoughts and images which language expresses, or, in many cases, in the very objects of our direct perception.

On the first of these,—the resemblance of mere *sounds*, in puns, and other trifling verbal analogies of the same class, it is unnecessary for me to dwell at present, as they before came under our review, when I treated of the influence of verbal similarities on the spontaneous suggestions of our trains of thought. How truly the ludicrousness of the pun consists in the unexpected similarity of discrepant images, is shewn by the greater or less pleasure which it affords, in proportion as the images themselves are more or less discrepant,—being greatest, therefore, when there is a complete opposition, with the

exception of that single tie of similar sound which is found unexpectedly to connect them. When the images themselves are congruous, so as to seem capable of being suggested by their own congruities, the pun is scarcely felt, or rather there is nothing felt to which the name of pun can be given.

But though the unsuspected connection of objects, by their resemblances of mere *sound*, as in puns, and all the small varieties of *verbal* and *literal wit*, may be uniformly ludicrous, this is far from being the case with the *other* species of unsuspected resemblance, in relations of *thought* to *thought*, or of existing things. It is necessary, therefore, to form some limitation of the general proposition as to the ludicrousness of relations which we perceive suddenly and unexpectedly, the only circumstance which as yet we have supposed to be necessary to the rise of the emotion.

In the first place, an exception must be made in the case of scientific truths. When it is discovered, in chemistry, or in any *other* physical science, that there truly have been *relations of objects or events*, which were not suspected by us before, there is *no feeling of ludicrousness*, though the substances found to have some common property should be opposite in every other respect. What could be more *unexpected*, or more incongruous with our previous conceptions of the specific gravity of metals, than the discovery, that the lightest of all substances, which are not in the state of an ærial fluid, is a *metal*, the base of another substance with which we had been long acquainted? Yet, though we were *astonished*

at such a discovery, we felt no tendency whatever to laugh. The relation, in short, did not seem to us to involve any thing ludicrous.

Why then do we not laugh, in such a case, at the discovery of the resemblance of objects or qualities, which were before regarded by us as not less incongruous than any of the unsuspected relations which are exhibited to us in the quaintest conundrum, that excites our laughter almost in the very instant in which the strange relation is pointed out? The principal reason of this difference, I conceive, is the *importance* of the physical relation. The interest attached by us to the *discovery of truth occupies* the mind too *seriously*, to allow that *light play of thought* which is essential to the rise of the gay emotion. In this respect, there is a very striking analogy to a species of animal action, which resembles our emotions of this kind also, in some other striking circumstances, particularly in the tendency to *laughter*, which is an equal and very curious result of both. If the palm of the hand be gently *tickled*, when the mind is vacant, the influence of the mechanical operation in this way is very powerful; but, if the faculties be exerted on any interesting subject, the *same* action on the palm of the hand may take place without any consequent laughter, and even, perhaps, without any consciousness of the process which has been taking place. A new phenomenon, or a *new discovered relation*, in former phenomena, engages the mind *too closely* to allow any feeling of ludicrousness, and consequent *laughter* to arise,—in the same way as those very circumstances would proba-

bly be sufficient to prevent the laughter of tickling, if the mechanical cause were applied *at the very moment at which we learn the important discovery,* and applied precisely in the same manner as when the strange feeling and the laughter were before the result.

There is another circumstance, that, in the case of a law of nature, however strange and apparently incongruous with our former conceptions its phenomena may be, must have considerable effect in occupying the mind more fully with the discovery;—that it is impossible for the mind to *rest* in the *simple discovery,* without rapidly passing in review the various circumstances that seem to us likely to be connected with it in the analogous phenomena,—a state of mind which is of itself most unfavourable to the mirthful emotion. There are, unquestionably, states of mind, during the prevalence of affliction, or any strong passion, in which there is no point in the jest, as there is no pleasure in the very aspect of joy. To the friend returning from the funeral of his friend, we, of course, do not think of uttering any of those common expressions of merriment, in which, at other times, we might occasionally indulge; the natural respect which we feel for sorrow, being sufficient to check the gaiety, or, at least, the appearance of gaiety. But, even though, in violation of that respect, which the sorrowful claim, the happiest effusions of wit were to be poured out, on such an occasion, there would be no answering mirth, in that heart, which, at other times, would have *felt* and *returned* the gaiety. What *grief,* thus manifestly *does,*

other strong interests, that absorb, in like manner, the general feelings of the mind, may well be supposed to do; and we may, therefore, listen to facts, the most seemingly *incongruous with our prior knowledge*, when our curiosity is awake to their importance, as objects of science, without the slightest disposition to those light emotions, which almost every other *incongruity*, or fancied incongruity, would have produced.

It may accordingly be remarked, that to those, who have not sufficient elementary knowledge of science, to feel any interest in physical truths, as one connected system, and no habitual desire of exploring the various relations of new phenomena, many of the facts in nature, which have an appearance of incongruity, as first stated, do truly *seem ludicrous*. If the vulgar were to be told, that they do not see directly the magnitude, or place, or distance of bodies, with their eyes alone, but, in some measure, by the indirect influence of other senses, on which light has no effect whatever,—that the feelings of cold and heat proceed from the same cause,—and that there is a great deal of heat in the coldest ice, they would not merely *disbelieve* what we might say, but they would laugh at what we tell them, as if it were *absolutely ridiculous*. The gravest truths of science would be to them, what the pleasantries of wit are to us.

I may remark, too, as a circumstance of some additional influence, that those who have been conversant with physical inquiries, are always prepared, in some degree, for the discovery of new properties,

even in objects the most familiar to them. With their full impression of the infinite variety of the powers of nature, there is scarcely any thing, indeed, which can be said to be truly incongruous with any thing. They are, in some degree, with respect to the physical relations of things, in the same situation as the professed wit, with respect to all the lighter analogies, who is too much accustomed to these in his own gay exercises of fancy, to feel much of the ludicrousness of surprise, when these slight, and seemingly incongruous, relations are developed in the pleasantries of others. It is not from envy or jealousy,—certainly not *always* from envy or jealousy,—that he does not laugh in such a case; but because the relation exhibited is of a kind with which he is too familiar, to share the astonishment that has animated the laughter of all the rest of the circle. The newly discovered congruities or incongruities of wit, in short, are to *him*, in a great measure, what some strange newly discovered property of a material substance, is to the chemist, or general experimental inquirer.

But whatever may be the *cause* of the difference of feeling, in this case of seeming anomaly, there can be no question as to the *fact itself*,—that the discovery of a *new relation*, in Physics,—and even of a relation *apparently most incongruous* with the relations formerly known,—does not produce, in the mind of the scientific observer, or general lover of science, a feeling of any *ludicrousness* in the discovery itself. The fact, indeed, seems to be reducible, without much difficulty, to the common laws of

mind; but still it must be admitted to form an important limitation to the general doctrine of the influence of unexpected, and apparently incongruous, relations, in producing the emotions referred to *ludicrousness* in their objects.

Even this limitation, however, is not sufficient. Every *metaphor*, *simile*, or other *figure of speech*, implies some unexpected relation presented to the mind; and, in many cases, a relation of objects, which were before regarded as having no congruity whatever;—and, therefore, it may be urged, the figures, in all such cases, should be felt as *ludicrous*, —not, indeed, those *similies, of ancient and well-accredited usage*, which form a part of the constant furniture of epic narrative,—similies, that, comparing heroes and lions, as heroes and lions have often been compared before, give us no new image; but remind us only that Homer has made the same comparison.* *These*, of course,—since they do not present to us any relation, which we did not know before, *as well*, as after the tiresome similitude has been again unfolded to us, in its full detail of circumstances,—may be allowed to pass, without our laughter, and without even being counted as an anomaly. But every *original* simile,—however just the relation may be which it expresses, and with whatever beauty of language it may be conveyed to our mind, must present to us an unsuspected resemblance in objects formerly known to us, and probably familiar. Why, then, do we feel no tendency to *laugh*, in such a case?

That we do not feel any tendency to laugh in such a case, arises, I think, from this circumstance. It is the art of the poet, in the management of his comparisons, to bring before us only the analogy on which his simile is founded, or at least such circumstances only as harmonize with the sentiment which he wishes to excite, and to keep from us, therefore, every circumstance discordant with it. Accordingly, when he is successful in this respect, the beauty of the similitude itself is all which we feel,—a delight which occupies us sufficiently, to prevent the rise in the mind of any feeling of the opposite qualities of the objects compared, such as I suppose to be necessary to constitute ludicrousness. When, however, the opposition, as may frequently be the case, is too remarkable not to be instantly felt, a certain degree of ludicrousness will as instantly be felt, in spite of all the magnificent language of the poet. Hence, it sometimes happens, that similies, which in one country or age excite no emotion, but that of beauty, may yet, in another age or country, excite an emotion of a very different kind, in consequence of the different sentiments with which, in different times and places, the same objects may be viewed. Whatever estimate the Greeks may have more justly formed of the many excellent qualities of the ass, the very name of that animal is with us combined with notions so disparaging, that it has become by this degradation, quite unsuitable to be introduced as a subject of laudatory comparison in a poem, that treats of gods and heroes. To those, indeed, who had the happiness of listening to the great

Rhapsodist himself, the comparison might seem sufficiently dignified, as well as just; but I presume, that there are few of our own countrymen, with the exception of those who admire whatever is in the Iliad, because it is in the Iliad, who have not felt some little tendency to smile, on reading the simile, in which Homer compares one of the most undaunted of his warriors, to that ill-used and much-enduring animal, which, by a very common aggravation of injustice, we have first oppressed, and then despised because we have oppressed it.

In this way, accordingly, I conceive, the feeling of beauty, as precluding, in ordinary cases, in which there is no very remarkable opposition of general qualities, the rise in the mind of the circumstances of opposition essential to the feeling of ludicrousness,—may account sufficiently for the absence of any light emotion, when new and unsuspected similitudes are developed to us in a comparison. Mere novelty of relation, is not sufficient of itself to constitute what is termed the ludicrous—that is to say —for the ludicrous is only a more general term—does not, of itself, give rise to any of those feelings of light emotion, which we comprehend under that general term. There are *similies* which are *sublime* —similies which are *beautiful*—similies which are ludicrous. *A newly perceived* relation, therefore, is not always ludicrous *in itself*, but only certain relations. What, then, are these relations, as distinguished from the others, which are felt without any tendency to this *gay surprise?*

The relations, which are ludicrous, and which, as ludicrous, in every instance involve some unsuspect-

ed resemblance of objects or qualities before regarded as incongruous, or some equally unsuspected diversity, when the resemblance was before supposed to be complete, admit, perhaps, of being referred to three classes—in the first place, to the class of those, in which *objects* are brought together, that are *noble* and *mean*, or the *forms of language*, commonly employed in treating subjects high and low, are transferred from one to the other. Such a transfer, as you well know, gives rise, in the one case, to the *burlesque*, in which objects, noble in themselves, are made ridiculous by the meanness of phrases and figures; in the other case, to the *mock-heroic*, in which, by a contrary process, the mean is rendered ridiculous by the magnificent trappings of rhetoric with which it is invested.

In these instances of artificial combination of the *very great*, and the *very little*, there can be no question as to the ludicrousness of the emotion which such piebald dignity excites; and there are circumstances which occur in nature, exactly of the same kind, and productive, therefore, of the same emotion; the incongruities being not in mere thought and image, but in objects directly perceived. When any well dressed person, walking along the street, falls into the mud of some splashy gutter, the *situation*, and the *dirt*, when combined with the character and appearance of the unfortunate stumbler, form a sort of *natural burlesque*, or *mock heroic*, in which there is a mixture of the *noble* and the mean, as much as in any of the works of art, to which those names are given. He who amuses us by his fall, is, in truth, for

the moment, an unintentional buffoon, performing for us, unwillingly, what the buffoon, with his stately strut, and his paper crown, and other trappings of mock royalty, strives to imitate, with *less effect*, because there is wanting, in *him*, that additional contrast of the lofty state of mind, with the ridiculous situation, which forms so important a part of the laughable whole in the accidental fall. It is this contrast of the state of mind, with that which we feel that it would be, if the circumstances were known to him, that forms the principal ludicrousness of the situation of any one, who has the misfortune of being in a crowded company, with his coat accidentally torn, or with any other imperfection of dress, that attracts all eyes, perhaps, but his own. In the rude pastimes of the village, in like manner, it is because the swain is

> "Mistrustless of his smutted face,
> That secret laughter titters round the place."

A second class of relations, which are *ludicrous*, are those which derive their ludicrousness, not from the objects themselves, but from the mind of the hearer or reader, which has been previously led to expect something very different from what is presented to it. To take a very trite example of this sort: If the question be asked, what wine do you like best? One person, perhaps, answering Champaigne, another Burgundy, a third, says, the wine which I am not to pay for. We laugh, if we laugh at all, chiefly because we expected a very different answer; and the incongruity which is felt, has rela-

tion, therefore, to our own state of mind, more than to the question itself. It is this previous anticipation of an answer, with which the answer received by us, is partially incongruous, that either forms the principal delight of many of the *bon mots* of conversation, or at least aids their effect most powerfully; and, by the contrast which it produces, it adds, in a most mortifying manner, to the painful keenness of an unexpected sarcasm. Thus, to take an instance from a story which Dr Arbuthnot tells us, "Sir William Temple, and the famous Lord Brumpker, being neighbours in the country, had frequently very sharp contentions; like other great men, one could not bear an equal, and the other would not admit of a superior. My Lord was a great admirer of curiosities, and had a very good collection, which Sir William used to undervalue upon all occasions, disparaging everything of his neighbour's, and giving something of his own the preference. This, by no means, pleased his Lordship, who took all opportunities of being revenged. One day, as they were discoursing together of their several rarities, my Lord very seriously and gravely replied to him, 'Sir William, say no more of the matter, you must at length yield to me, I having lately got something which it is impossible for you to obtain; for, sir,' said his Lordship smiling, 'my Welch steward has sent me a flock of *geese*, and those are what you can *never have*, since *all your geese are swans*.'"* In this case, there can be no doubt, that the keenness of the

* Miscellanies, 2d Edit. vol. 1. p. 113.

sarcasm would be far more severely felt, in consequence of the previous anticipation of an answer of a very different kind.

The feeling of ludicrousness is the same, when our previous anticipation is disappointed by agreement, where we expected difference, as when it is disappointed by difference, where we expected agreement. Such is the case in the game of Cross Purposes, where, in a series of questions and answers, the answers are *paired* with questions to which they were not given. In what are termed the cross readings of newspapers, where, without paying regard to the separation into columns, we read what is in the same line of the page, through the successive columns, as if continuous, there is little agreement of sense to be expected, and we smile accordingly at the strange congruities which such readings may sometimes discover. Many of you are probably acquainted with the ingenious fictions of this sort of coincidence, that appeared originally in the Public Advertiser, with the happily appropriate signature of Papyrus Cursor; and which were well known to be the production of the late Mr C. Whiteford. I quote a few specimens for the sake of those among you who may not be acquainted with them.

"The sword of state was carried——
Before Sir John Fielding, and committed to Newgate.

Last night, the princess royal was baptized——
Mary, *alias* Moll Hacket, *alias* Black Moll.

This morning the Right Honourable the Speaker——
Was convicted of keeping a disorderly house.

A certain commoner will be created a peer.
*** No greater reward will be offered.

Yesterday the new Lord Mayor was sworn in,
Afterwards tossed and gored several persons.

When the honour of knighthood was conferred on him,
To the great joy of that noble family.

A fine turtle, weighing upwards of eighty pounds,
Was carried before the sitting alderman.

'Tis said the ministry is to be new modell'd;
The repairs of which will cost the public a large sum annually.

This has occasion'd a cabinet-council to be held
At Betty's fruit-shop in St James's-street.

One of His Majesty's principal Secretaries of State
Fell off the shafts, being asleep, and the wheels went over him.

He was examined before the sitting alderman,
And no questions asked.

Genteel places in any of the public offices,
So much admired by the nobility and gentry.

This morning, will be married, the lord viscount,
And afterwards hung in chains, pursuant to his sentence."*

A third set of relations of this kind, derive their ludicrousness from our consideration of the mind of the *speaker*, or *writer*, or performer of the action. When our mirth is excited at any awkward effort, for example, we laugh, because we are aware of that which the effort was intended to perform, and are struck with the contrast of the performance itself. We laugh, in short, at the awkward failure, not at the motion or attitude itself, considered simply, with-

* Preserved in one of the volumes of the "New Foundling Hospital for Wit."

out relation to some higher end, as a mere motion or attitude; and we laugh at the failure, because we compare, as I have said, the awkward result with the grace which was intended, or which, at least, we imagine to have been intended.

It is as might be supposed, on a similar principle, that our mirth is excited by every appearance of mental awkwardness. We laugh, for example, when we discover in a work any very visible marks of constraint and difficulty on the part of an author, as in far-fetched thoughts, or stiff and quaint phraseology, —and we laugh, not merely on account of the incongruity of the thoughts or phrases themselves, which are thus strangely brought into union, though this, perhaps, may form the chief element of the ludicrousness, but in some degree also, at the contrast of the labour which we discover, with the ease which the writer is supposed by us to assume and affect. That composition of every sort involves difficulty on the part of the composer, we know well; but we still require that the difficulty should be kept from our sight. We must not see him biting his nails, and torturing himself to give us satisfaction. His great aim accordingly is, to present to us what is *excellent*, but to present it, so free from any marks of the toil which it has cost, as to seem almost to have risen in the mind by the unrestrained course of spontaneous suggestion. Any appearance of constraint, therefore, presents to us a sort of incongruity, almost as striking as when the noble and the mean are blended together. Even when we think, in reading any of the extravagant conceits that abound so much in the works of our older writers, that we are smiling

merely at the images which are brought together, and which nature seems to have intended never to meet, we are, in truth, smiling in part at the very feelings of the writer, when he was so *laboriously* and *painfully absurd*. If the feelings that succeed each other, in the mind even of the sublimest poet, in the weary hour of composition, could, by any process, be made distinctly visible to us, there is no small reason to apprehend, that, with all our reverence for *his noble art*, and for his own individual *excellence in that art*, our emotions would be of the ludicrous kind, or, at least, that some portion of the ludicrous would mingle with our admiration. There can be no question, that he would seem to have performed *more labour*, if we could be thus conscious of his feelings, before his labour was half accomplished, than if we were only to have exhibited to us the *beautiful results* of the whole long continued exercise of his thought. This labour, which a skilful writer knows so well how to conceal from us, a writer, who is fond of astonishing us with extravagant conceits, forces constantly upon our view; and there is hence scarcely any image, which he presents to us, *so ludicrous* as that picture which he indirectly gives us of himself.

Another set of examples, in which the consideration of the mind of the speaker forms an essential part of the ludicrousness, are those which are commonly termed *bulls* or *blunders*; in which there is no ludicrousness, unless we are able to distinguish what the speaker meant, and thus to discover some strange agreement of his real meaning, with that

opposite or contradictory meaning which the words seem to convey. A bull must, therefore, be genuine, or for the moment considered to be genuine, before it can divert with its incongruity. As mere nonsense, it would be as little amusing as any other nonsense. We must have before us, in conception at least, the speaker himself, and contrast the well-meaning seriousness of his affirmation with the verbal absurdity which he utters, of which we are at the same time able to discover the unsuspected tie.

Such I conceive to be the chief varieties of mixed congruity and incongruity which operate in producing this emotion. But, though I have considered these varieties separately, you are not on that account to suppose, that the varieties themselves are not frequently combined in different proportions; thus heightening what would be ludicrous in one respect, by ludicrousness of another species. The images themselves,—the mind of the speaker or writer who presents them,—the disappointed expectation of the hearer or reader,—may all present to us a strange mixture of discrepancy and agreement, and afford elements, therefore, that are to be jointly taken into account in explaining the one complex emotion, which is the equal result of all.

It is not, then, every newly discovered relation of objects, that excites in us emotions of the ludicrous class, but only *certain* relations, which present to us *peculiar* incongruities. In all these, however, the *unexpectedness* is an important element; since, when we have become completely *familiar* with the rela-

tion, we cease to have the emotion which it before instantly excited. We still, however, call the *objects* or *images* ludicrous, though they excite no emotion of this sort in our mind, any more, perhaps, than the gravest reasoning; but we retain the name, because we speak of them, or think of them, in *reference to other minds*, in which we know that they will excite the same emotion that was originally excited by them in ourselves. In thinking of the laughter which may thus be produced in others, we are not unfrequently affected with the emotion, as before; but it is an emotion of sympathy, not of mere ludicrousness; or, if there be any thing directly ludicrous, it is in this very consideration of incongruity in the minds of others, when we think of their expectation while they read, as contrasted with the surprise that is to follow. To know the relation, in short, as far as the relation consists in the mere images themselves, is to feel, that the object of which we know the relations, will be ludicrous to others,—not to feel it ludicrous to ourselves.

LECTURE LIX.

I. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS NOT INVOLVING NECESSARILY ANY MORAL FEELING.—USES OF LUDICROUSNESS.—GENERAL REMARKS ON CLOSING THE FIRST SUBDIVISION OF OUR EMOTIONS.—SUBDIVISION, II. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS, IN WHICH MORAL FEELING IS NECESSARILY INVOLVED.—1. FEELINGS DISTINCTIVE OF VICE AND VIRTUE.—2. EMOTIONS OF LOVE AND HATE.

My last Lecture, Gentlemen, was devoted to the consideration of the phenomena of our emotions, of that species of which the objects are distinguished by the name of *ludicrous*,—emotions which we found to originate always in some mixture of congruity and incongruity, suddenly and unexpectedly perceived. In establishing this general law, I stated, at the same time, some apparent exceptions to the rise of the mirthful emotion in such cases, of the discovery of unsuspected agreement, and endeavoured, I hope successfully, to shew that all these seeming anomalies are such as might naturally have been anticipated, as consequences of the operation of other well-known laws of the mind.

The varieties of such mixtures of congruity and incongruity, as constitute what is termed ludicrous-

ness, were considered by us in order; first, in the mere arbitrary signs of language, and next in the relations of thoughts and existing things,—whether in the discrepancy of the images themselves, as noble and mean,—in the disappointed anticipations of the hearer or reader,—or in the difference of the obvious meaning of the expression of the speaker, or writer, or performer of some action, compared with that real meaning which we know him, in his awkward blunder, to have intended.

The emotion is not a simple feeling, but the analysis of it does not seem very difficult. The necessary unexpectedness of the congruity or incongruity that is remarked, seems of itself to point out one element, in the *astonishment* which may naturally be supposed to arise in such a case; and the other element, which nature has made as quick to arise on the perception of the ludicrous object, as astonishment itself, is a vivid feeling of delight, one of the forms of that joy or gladness which I comprehended in my enumeration of the few primary constituents of our emotions. Astonishment, combined with this particular delight, is the mirthful emotion that has been the subject of our inquiry; and Akenside, therefore, in giving it the name of "gay surprise,"* seems to have expressed, with the analytic accuracy of a philosopher, the complex feelings which he was poetically describing.

In considering the delight that is combined with

* The expression in the original seems to be "gay contempt." See Pleasures of Imagination, B. III. v. 260,—and 2d form of the poem, B. II. v. 524.

astonishment in the mirthful emotion, we are apt to consider it as more different from other species of gladness than it truly is, because we think of more than what is strictly mental. The laughter is a phenomenon of so particular a kind, and so impressive to our senses, that we think of it as much as of the feelings which it indicates; but the laughter, it should be remembered, is a bodily convulsion, which might or might not be combined with the internal merriment, without altering the nature of the inward emotion itself. This spasmodic muscular action, therefore, however remarkable it may be as a concomitant bodily effect, and even the oppressive feeling of fatigue to which that muscular action, when long continued, gives rise, we should leave out in our analysis of the mere emotion,—that is all with which the physiologist of mind is concerned,—and leaving out what is bodily in the external signs of merriment, we discover only the two internal elements which I have mentioned; that may, in certain cases, be more complicated by a mixture of *contempt*, but to which, as mere mirth, that third occasional element is far from being essential.

The advantages which we derive from our susceptibility of this species of emotion, are, in their immediate influence on the cheerfulness, and therefore on the general happiness of society, sufficiently obvious. How many hours would pass wearily along, but for these pleasantries of wit, or of easier and less pretending gaiety, which enliven what would have been dull, and throw many bright colours on what would have been gloomy. We are not to estimate these accessions of pleasure lightly, because they relate to

objects that may seem trifling, when considered together with those more serious concerns, by which our ambition is occupied, and in relation to which, in the success or failure of our various projects, we look back on the past months or years of our life, as fortunate or unfortunate. If these serious concerns alone were to be regarded, we might often have been very fortunate and very unhappy, as in other circumstances we might often have had much happiness in the hours and days of years, which terminated at last in the disappointment of some favourite scheme. It is good to travel with pure and balmy airs and cheerful sunshine, *though* we should not find, at the end of our journey, the friend whom we wished to see; and the gaieties of social converse, though they are not, in our journey of life, what we travel to obtain, are, during the continuance of our journey, at once a freshness which we breathe, and a light that gives every object to sparkle to our eye, with a radiance that is not its own.

Such are the immediate and obvious influences of this emotion. But it is not of slight value in influences that are less direct; though capable of being sometimes abused, and far from being always so exactly coincident with moral impropriety, as to furnish a criterion of rectitude, it must be allowed to be, in its ordinary circumstances, favourable to virtue, presenting often a check to improprieties, on which, but for such a restraint, the heedless would rush without scruple—a check, too, which is, by its very nature, peculiarly suited to those who despise the more serious restraints of moral principle, and

the opinion of the virtuous. The world's dread laugh, which even the firm philosopher is said to be scarcely able to scorn, cannot be scorned by those to whom the approbation of the world is, what conscience is to the wise and virtuous; and though that laugh is certainly not so unerring as the voice of moral judgment within the breast, it is still, as I have said, in far the greater number of cases, in accordance with it; and when it differs, differs far more frequently in the degree of its censure or its praise, than in actual censure of what is praiseworthy, or praise of what is wholly censurable. It is often, too, of importance, that we should regulate our conduct with regard to relations, which all mankind *cannot* have leisure for analysing, and which very few, even of those who have leisure, have *patience* to examine. The vivid feeling of ridicule, in such cases, as more instant in its operations, may hence be considered as a glorious warning from that benignant Power, who,

> —— "conscious what a scanty pause
> From labours and from care, the wider lot
> Of humble life affords for studious thought,
> To scan the maze of nature, therefore stamp'd
> The glaring scenes, with characters of *scorn*,
> As broad, as obvious, to the passing clown,
> As to the letter'd sage's curious eye."*

Having now then finished my remarks on the phenomena of beauty, sublimity, and wit, I close

* Pleasures of Imagination, B. II. v. 271—277.

with them my view of the emotions that are the object of the species of *judgment*, which is denominated *taste*. I have already stated my reasons for dividing and arranging the phenomena of *taste*, under two distinct heads, as they are either *emotions*, or feelings of the *aptitudes of certain images or combinations of images*, for producing those emotions. To *feel* the *emotion*, which a *beautiful*, or *sublime*, or *ludicrous* object excites, is one state of mind; to have a knowledge of the aptitude of different *means* of *exciting* these *emotions*, so as to discern accurately, what will tend to produce them, and what will have no tendency of this sort, is *another state or function of the mind*,—to which the former, indeed, is necessary, but which is itself far from being implied, in the mere susceptibility of the pleasing emotion. That power, by which, from the inductions of former observations of the mechanic powers, we predict the effects of certain combinations of wheels and pullies in machinery,—of certain mixtures in the chemical arts,—and, in legislative or general politics, of certain motives, that are to operate on the minds of a people, is not supposed by us to be a *different power*, merely because the relations which it discerns, are different. In all, and in all alike, it is termed *judgment*, *reason*, *discernment*, or whatever other name may be used, for expressing the same discriminating function. The *knowledge* necessary for the *predictions*, in mechanics, chemistry, and politics, is, indeed, different; but the *power*, which avails itself of this knowledge, is in kind the same. In like manner, the knowledge

which the discriminating function of *taste* supposes, is very different, from that, which is necessary in *mechanics, chemistry, politics*, though not more different from *them*, than these various species of knowledge are relatively different. But, in *taste*, as in those sciences, when the knowledge is once acquired, it is the same capacity of feeling the relation of means and *ends*, which avails itself of this knowledge of the past, in determining the various aptitudes of objects for a desired effect,—whether for *producing or retarding motion*, as in mechanics,—for forming compositions or decompositions, as in chemistry,—for augmenting and securing the happiness of nations, as in politics,—or for inducing various delightful emotions, as in taste. If we do not give different names, in *all* these cases, to the capacity of feeling the relation of means and ends, when the means and ends are in the different cases different, why should we suppose a new faculty to be exercised, and invent a new name in one alone? The politician, who judges of the reception which the multitude will give to certain laws; and the critic, who judges of the reception they will give to certain works of art, have, for their subject, the same mind; and *both* determine the aptitude of certain feelings of the mind, for inducing certain other feelings. The *general power*, by which we discover *the relation of means and ends*,—of states of mind or circumstances which are prior, and states of mind or circumstances which are consequent to these, is that which is exercised in both,—the function, to which I have

given the name of relative suggestion,—from which we derive our feeling of this, as of every other relation. Without the emotions of beauty and sublimity, there would, of course, be no *taste*, to discern the aptitude of certain means for producing these emotions,—because there would not be that series of feelings, of which the relative antecedence and consequence are felt. On the other hand, without the judgment which discerns this order, in the relation of means and ends, there might, indeed, still be the *emotions*, rising, precariously, as nature presented to us certain objects that excite them, but no voluntary adaptation of the great stores of forms, and sounds, and colours, for *producing them*—none of those *fine arts*, the results of our knowledge of the relations which certain feelings bear to certain other feelings, —arts which give as much happiness as embellishment to life, and which form so essential a part of our notion of civilization, that a nation of philosophers, if incapable of any of the conceptions and resulting emotions of this kind, would stand some chance of being counted by us, only a better order of reasoning savages.

In no part of our nature is the *pure benevolence* of Heaven more strikingly conspicuous than in our susceptibility of the emotions of this class. The pleasure which they afford, is a pleasure that has no immediate connection with the means of preservation of our animal existence; and which shews, therefore, though all other proof were absent, that the Deity, who *superadded* these means of delight,

must have had some other object in view, in forming us as we are, than the mere continuance of a race of beings, who were to save the earth from becoming a wilderness. In consequence of these emotions, which have made all nature "beauty to our eye, and music to our ear," it is scarcely possible for us to look around, without feeling either some *happiness* or some *consolation*. Sensual pleasures soon pall, even upon the profligate, who seeks them in vain in the means which were accustomed to produce them; weary, almost to disgust, of the very pleasures which he seeks, and yet astonished that he does not find them. The labours of *severer intellect*, if long continued, exhaust the energy which they employ; and we cease, for a time, to be capable of thinking accurately, from the very intentness and accuracy of our thought. The pleasures of *taste*, however, by their variety of easy delight, are safe from the languor which attends any monotonous or severe occupation, and, instead of palling on the mind, they produce in it, with the very delight which is present, a quicker sensibility to future pleasure. Enjoyment springs from enjoyment; and, if we have not some deep wretchedness within, it is scarcely possible for us, with the delightful resources which nature and art present to us, *not* to be happy as often as we will to be happy.—In the beautiful language of a poet, of whose powerful verse I have already frequently availed myself, in illustration of the subjects that have engaged us, nature endows us with all her treasures, *if* we only will *deign to use them*.

"Oh blest of Heaven, whom not the languid songs
Of Luxury the syren, nor the bribes
Of sordid wealth, nor all the gaudy spoils
Of pageant honour, can seduce to leave
Those ever-blooming sweets, which, from the store
Of nature, fair Imagination culls
To charm the enliven'd soul!—What though not all
Of mortal offspring can attain the heights
Of envied life,—though only few possess
Patrician treasures, or imperial state,
Yet Nature's care, to all her children just,
With richer treasures, and an ampler state
Endows, at large, whatever happy man
Will deign to use them.—*His* the city's pomp,
The rural honours *his*.—Whate'er adorns
The princely dome,—the column and the arch,
The breathing marble, and the sculptured gold,
Beyond the proud possessor's narrow claim
His tuneful breast enjoys.—For him the Spring
Distils her dews, and from the silken gem
It's lucid leaves unfolds:—for him the hand
Of Autumn tinges every fertile branch
With blooming gold, and blushes like the morn.
Each passing hour sheds tribute from her wings,
And still new beauties meet his lonely walks,
And loves unfelt attract him. Not a breeze
Flies o'er the meadow,—not a cloud imbibes
The setting sun's effulgence—not a strain
From all the tenants of the warbling shade
Ascends,—but whence his bosom can partake
Fresh pleasure, unreproved."*

Such is that universal possession of nature which the susceptibility of the emotions of taste conveys to us,—a possession, extending to an infinity of objects,

* Pleasures of Imagination, B. III. v. 568—598.

which no earthly power can appropriate, and which enjoys even objects that have been so appropriated, with a possession more delightful than that which they afford, in many cases, to the listless eyes of their proud, but discontented master.

After these remarks on that order of our immediate emotions, which do not involve necessarily any moral feeling, I proceed to that other order of the same class, in which some moral feeling is necessarily involved.

The first of these, according to the arrangement formerly submitted to you, are those emotions which constitute, as I conceive, the *feelings distinctive of vice and virtue*,—emotions that arise on the contemplation of certain actions, observed or conceived.

It is not my intention, however, in this part of my Course, to enter on the discussion of the great questions connected with the doctrine of *obligation*, as either presupposed or involved in our consideration of such actions. The moral affections which I consider at present, I consider rather *physiologically* than *ethically*, as *parts of our mental constitution*, not *as* involving the *fulfilment* or *violation* of *duties*.

In this point of view, even the boldest sceptic, who denies all the *grounds of moral obligation*, must still allow the *existence of the feelings which we are considering*, as states or *affections* of the mind, indicative of certain susceptibilities in the mind, of being so affected. Whether we have reason to approve and disapprove, or have no reason whatever,

in the nature of their actions, to regard, with a different eye, those whom, by some strange illusion,—but by an illusion only, we now feel ourselves almost necessitated to *love* or *abhor*,—though it be *an error of logic*, to consider the parricide, who, in preparing to plunge his dagger, could hold his lamp unmoved, and, with no other apprehension than of the too early waking of his victim, look fixedly on the pale and gentle features of him, whose very sleep was, at the moment, perhaps, made happy by some dream of happiness to his murderer, as less worthy, even in the slightest respect, of our esteem, than the son who rushes to inevitable death, in defence of the grey hairs which he honours,—though it be not less an error of logic to extend our moral distinctions, and the love or hate which accompanies them, to those who make not a few individuals only, but whole millions, wretched or happy,—to consider the usurping despot, who dares to be a *tyrant*, in the land on which he was born a *freeman*, as a less glorious object of our admiration, than the *last assertor* of rights which seemed still to exist, while *he* existed to assert them,—who, in that cause which allows no fear of peril, could see nothing in guilty power which a brave man could dread, but everything which it would be a crime to obey,—and who ennobled with his blood the scaffold, from which he rose to liberty and Heaven, making it an altar of the *richest and most gratifying sacrifice* which *man* can offer, to the great Being whom he serves;—even though we should be unfortunate enough to look on the tyrant, with the same *envy*, as on his victim, and could see no reason for

those distinctive terms of *vice* and *virtue*, in the two cases, the force of which we should feel equally, though we had not a word to express the meaning that is *constantly in our heart*;—still the fact of the *general approbation and disapprobation*, we must admit, even in reserving for ourselves the privilege of indifference. They are *phenomena of the mind*, to be ranked with the *general mental phenomena*, as much as our *sensations* or *remembrances*,—*illusions* to be classed with our other illusions,—or *truths*, to be classed with our most important truths.

This distinctive reference would be equally necessary, though our emotions of this kind did not arise immediately from our *contemplation of actions*, in the very moment in which we contemplate them simply as actions; but, from *processes of reasoning* and regard to *general rules of propriety*, formed gradually by attention to the circumstances in which man is placed, and all the good which, in such circumstances, he is capable of feeling, or *occasioning* to others. The vivid distinctive regard, at whatever stage it began, would not the less be an *affection of the mind*, referable to *certain laws*, that guide its susceptibilities of emotion; but the truth is, that the moral feeling arises without any consideration, except that of the *action itself*, and *its circumstances*. The *general rules of propriety* may, indeed, seem to *confirm* our suffrage, but the *suffrage itself* is *given before their sanction*. The rules themselves are ultimately founded, as Dr Smith very justly remarks, on *these particular emotions*:—"We do not originally, approve or condemn particular actions," to use

his words, "because, upon examination, they appear to be agreeable, or inconsistent with a certain general rule. The general rule, on the contrary, is formed, by finding, from experience, that *all actions*, of a *certain kind*, or *circumstanced in a certain manner*, *are approved* or *disapproved* of. To the man, who first saw an inhuman murder, committed from avarice, envy, or unjust resentment; and upon one, too, who loved and trusted the murderer,—who beheld the last agonies of the dying person,—who heard him, with his expiring breath, complain more of the perfidy and ingratitude of his false friend, than of the violence which had been done to him,—there could be no occasion, in order to conceive how horrible such an action was, that he should *reflect* that one of the most sacred rules of conduct, was what prohibited the taking away the life of an innocent person, that this was a plain violation of that rule, and *consequently* a very *blameable action*. His detestation of this crime, it is evident, would arise *instantaneously*, and antecedent to his having formed to himself any such general rule. The general rule, on the contrary, which he might afterwards form, would be founded upon the detestation which he felt, necessarily arising in his own breast, at the thought of this, and every other particular action of the same kind."*

Of the *universality* of these moral emotions, which attend our *mere perception of certain actions*, or our *reasonings on the beneficial or injurious tendency*

* Theory of Moral Sentiments, Part III. c. iv.

of actions, what more convincing proof can be imagined, than the very *permanence* of these feelings, in the breasts of those, whose course of life they are every moment reproaching,—who, even when they are false to virtue, are not false to their *love* of *virtue*, and whose secret heart, if it could be laid open to those whom they are endeavouring to seduce, and who can listen only to the *voice of the lips*, would *proclaim* to them the charms of that innocence which the lips are affecting to deride, and the slavery of that licentiousness which the lips are proclaiming to be the glorious privilege of the free.

"What law of any state," says an eloquent Roman moralist, "has ever ordered the child to love his parents, the parents to love their child, each individual to love himself? It would be not *more* idle, to order us to *love virtue*, which, by its own nature, has so many charms, that it is impossible for the wicked to withhold from it their approbation. Who is there, that, living amid crimes, and in the practice of every injury which he can inflict on society, does not still wish to obtain some praise of goodness, and cover his very atrocities, if they can by any means be covered, with some veil, however slight, of honourable semblance? No one has so completely shaken off the very character of man, as *to wish to be wicked*, for the mere sake of *wickedness*. The very robber, who lives by rapine, and who does not hesitate to strike his dagger into the breast of the passenger, who has any plunder to repay the stroke, would still rather *find* what he takes by violence, only because he cannot hope to find it. The most

abandoned of human beings, if he could enjoy the wages of guilt without the guilt itself, would not *prefer to be* guilty. It is no small obligation," he continues, "which we owe to nature, that Virtue reveals her glorious light, not to a *few only*, but to all mankind. Even those who do not follow her, still see the splendid track along which she moves." "Placet suapte natura: adeoque gratiosa virtus est, ut insitum sit etiam malis, *probare meliora*. Quis est, qui non beneficus videri velit,—qui non, inter scelera et injurias, opinionem bonitatis affectet—qui non ipsis quæ impotentissime fecit, speciam aliquam induat recti? Quod non facerent, nisi illos honesti, et per se expetendi, amor cogeret, moribus suis opinionem contrariam quærere, et nequitiam abdere, cujus *fructus concupiscitur*, *ipsa* vero odio pudoreque est.—Maximum hoc habemus naturæ meritum, quod virtus in omnium animos lumen suum permittit: etiam qui non *sequuntur*, illam *vident*."†

And it is well, surely, even the most sceptical will admit, that nature, if we *are deceived* by this delightful vision, does permit us to be deceived by it. Though virtue were only a dream, and all which we admire, as fallacious as the imaginary colours which shine upon our slumber in the darkness of the night, who could wish the slumber to be broken, if, instead of the groves of Paradise, and the pure and happy forms that people them, we were to awake in a world, in which the moral sunshine was extinguished, and everything on which we vainly turned our eye were

* Seneca de Beneficiis, lib. iv. c. 17.

to be only one equal gloom? Though the libertine should have hardihood enough to shake, or, at least, to try to shake, from his *own mind*, every feeling of moral admiration or abhorrence, he still could not wish, that others, among whom he is to live, should be as free as himself. *For his own profit*, he would wish all others to be *virtuous*, *himself* the *single exception*; and what would profit *each*, individually, *must profit all*. If he were rich, he could not wish the multitude that surrounded him to approve of the rapine which would strip him of all the sources of his few miserable enjoyments, and to approve, too, perhaps, of *murder*, as the shortest mode of separating him from his possessions; if he were in *want*, he could not wish those, whose charity he was forced to solicit, to see, in charity, nothing but a foolish mode of voluntarily abridging their own means of selfish luxury; if he were *condemned*, for some offence, to the prison or the gibbet, he would not wish *mercy* to be regarded as *a word without meaning*. What noble and irresistible evidence is this of the *excellence of virtue*, even in its *worldly and temporary advantages*, that, if all men were, what all individually would wish them to be, there would not be a single crime to pollute the earth!

When we reflect, how many temptations there are to the multitudes, who live together in social society,—temptations, that, wherever they look around them, would lead them, if they had not been rendered capable of moral affections, as much as of their sentient enjoyments and passions, to seek the attain-

ment of the objects within their view, and almost within their reach, and to seek it as readily by *force*, or by falsehood, as by that patient *industry*, which could not fail to seem to them more tedious, and, therefore, less worthy of their prudent choice; when we think of all the temptations of all these objects, and the facilities of attaining them by violence or deceit, and yet observe the security with which man, in society, *spreads out* his enjoyments, as it were, to the view of others, and delights in the number of the gazers and enviers, that are attracted by them, it is truly as beautiful, as it is astonishing, to think of the simple means, on which so much security depends. The *laws*, which men have found it expedient, for their common interest, to make, and to enforce, are, indeed, the *obvious* pieces of machinery, by which this great result is brought about. But how much of its motion depends on *springs*, that are scarcely regarded by those, who look only to the *exterior wheels*, as they perform their rotation in beautiful regularity! The *grosser* measures of *fraud* or *force* may be prevented by enactments, that attach to those measures of fraud or force, a *punishment*, the risk of which would render the attempt too *perilous*, to obtain for it the approbation even of selfish prudence. But what innumerable actions are there, over which the laws, that cannot extend to the secret thoughts of man, or to half the possibilities of human action, must have as little controul, as it is in our power physically to exercise, over the unseen and unsuspected elements of future storms,

which, long before the whirlwind has begun, are *preparing* that desolation, which it is afterwards to produce. The *force* of open *violence*, the laws *may* check,—but they cannot check the *still more powerful force* of *seduction*,—the *frauds* of *mere persuasion*, which are never to be known to be frauds, but by the conscience of the deceiver, and which may be said to *steal* the very *assent* of the *unsuspecting mind*, as they afterwards steal the wealth, or the worldly honours, or voluptuous enjoyments, for which that assent was necessary. It is in these circumstances, that *He*, who formed and protects us, has provided a check for that injustice, which is *beyond* the restraining power of man, and has produced, what the whole united strength of nations could not produce,—by a few simple feelings,—a check and controul as mighty, as it is silent and invisible,—which he has placed within the mind of the very criminal himself, where it would most be needed,—or rather in the mind of him, who, but *for these feelings*, would *have been* a criminal, and who, *with them*, is *virtuous* and *happy*. The *voice within*, which approves or disapproves,—long before action, and before even the very wish, that would lead to action, can be said to be fully formed,—has in it a *restraining force*, *more* powerful than a thousand gibbets, and it is accompanied with the certainty, that, in every breast around, there is a *similar voice*, that would join its dreadful award to that which would be for ever felt within. The feelings of moral approbation and disapprobation are thus at once the *security* of *virtue* and its *avengers*,—its secu-

rity in the happiness that is felt, and the happiness that is promised to every future year and hour of virtuous remembrance,—its avengers in that long period of earthly punishment, when its guilty injurer is to read in every eye that gazes on him, the reproach which is to be for ever sounding on his heart.

I have already said, however, that it is merely as a part of our mental constitution that I at present speak of our distinctive feelings of the *moral differences of actions*;—as *states* or *affections*, or *phenomena* of the mind, and nothing more. The further illustration of them, in their most important light, as principles of conduct, I reserve for our future discussions of the nature and obligation of virtue.

The moral emotions, to which I next proceed, are those of *love* and *hate*,—words, which, as general terms, comprehend a great variety of affections, that have different names, according to their own *intensity*, and the notion which they involve of the *qualities* on which the love is founded, as when we speak of love or affection simply, or of *regard, esteem, respect, veneration*, and which have different names also, according to the objects to which they are directed, as *love, friendship, patriotism, devotion*, —to which, or, at least, to far the greater part of which there are *corresponding terms* of the varieties of the opposite emotion of hatred, which I need not waste your time with attempting to enumerate. Indeed, if we were to compare the *two* vocabularies of *love* and *hate*, I fear that we should find rather a mortifying proof of our disposition to discover *im-*

perfections more rapidly than the *better qualities*, since we are still richer in terms of contempt and dislike, than in terms of admiration and reverence.

The analysis of love, as a complex feeling, presents to us always, at least, two elements,—a vivid delight in the contemplation of the object, and a desire of good to that object. To love, then, it is essential that there should be some *quality*, in the object, which is capable of giving pleasure, since love, which is the consequence of this, is itself a pleasurable emotion. There is a feeling of beauty, external, moral, or intellectual, which affords the primary delight of loving, and continues to mingle with the kind desire which it has produced. In this sense, indeed, *but in this sense only*, the most disinterested love is *selfish*, though it is a sense in which selfishness may be said to be as little *sordid* as the most generous sacrifices which virtue can make. It loves, not because delight *is to be felt in loving*, but because it has been impressed with qualities which nature has rendered it impossible to view without delight. It *must*, therefore, *have felt* that delight which arises from the contemplation of objects worthy of being loved; yet the delight thus felt has not been valued *for itself*, but as indicative, like some sweet voice of nature, of those *qualities* to which affection may be safely given. Though we cannot, then, when there is no interfering passion, think of the virtues of others *without pleasure*, and must, therefore, in loving virtue, *love what is by its own nature* pleasing, the love of *the virtue which cannot exist with-*

out the pleasure, is surely an affection very different from the love of the mere pleasure existing, if it had been possible for it to exist, *without the virtue,*—a pleasure, that accompanies the virtue, only as the soft or brilliant colouring of nature flows from the great orb above,—a gentle radiance, that is delightful to our eyes, indeed, and to our heart, but which leads our eye upward to the splendid source from which it flows, and our heart, still higher, to that Being by whom the sun was made.

The distinction of the love of that which *is pleasing,* but which is *loved only for those intrinsic qualities which the pleasure accompanies,* and of the love of *mere pleasure,* without any regard to the qualities which excite it, is surely a *very obvious one;* and it is not more obvious, as thus *defined,* than in the *heart* of the virtuous,—in the generous friendships which he feels, and the generous sacrifices to which he readily submits. If, as is sometimes strangely contended, the love that animates such a heart be *selfishness,* it must be allowed, at least, that it is a selfishness, which, for the sake of others, can often prefer penury to wealth,—which can hang, for many sleepless nights, unwearied and unconscious of any personal fear, over the bed of contagion,—which can enter the dungeon, a voluntary prisoner, without the power even of giving any other comfort than that of the mere presence of an object beloved,—or fling itself before the dagger which would pierce *another* breast, and rejoice in receiving the stroke. It is the selfishness which thinks not of

itself—the selfishness of all that is generous and heroic in man—I would almost say, the selfishness which is most divine in God.

Obvious as the distinction is, however, it has not been made by many philosophers, or, at least, by many writers who assume that honourable name,—the superficial but dazzling lovers of paradox, who prefer to truths that seem too simple to stand in need of defence, any errors, if only they be errors, that can be defended with ingenuity,—though, in the present case, even this small praise of ingenuity scarcely can be allowed; and the errors which would seduce men into the belief of general selfishness, from which their nature shrinks, are fortunately as revolting to our *understanding* as they are to our heart. The fuller discussion of these, however, I defer, till that part of the Course which treats of virtue *as a system of conduct.* At present, I merely point out to you the fallacy which has arisen from the pleasing nature of the emotions in *which love consists,* or which *precede love,*—as if the pleasure *in which love is necessarily presupposed* were *itself all* to which the love owes its rise, and for the direct sake of which the love itself is felt.

I may remark, however, even now, the unfortunate effect of the poverty of our language, in aiding the illusion. The word selfishness, or, at least, self-love, has various meanings, some of which imply nothing that is reprehensible, while, in other senses, it is highly so. It may mean either the satisfaction which we feel in our own enjoyment, which, when

there is no duty violated, is far from being, even in the slightest degree, unworthy of the purest mind; or it means that exclusive regard to our own pleasures, at the expence of the happiness of others, which is as degrading to the individual as it is pernicious to society. All men, it may, indeed, be allowed, are selfish, in the first of these meanings of the term, but this is only one meaning of a word, which has also a very different sense. The difference, however, is afterwards forgotten by us, because the same term is used; and we ascribe to *self-love*, in the *one sense*, what is true of it *only in the other*.

Much of the obscurity and confusion of the moral system of Pope, in his Essay on Man, arises from this occasional transition from one of the senses of the term to the other, without perceiving that a transition has been made. It is impossible to read some of the most beautiful passages of that poem, without feeling the wish, that we had some term to express the first of these senses, without any possibility of the suggestion of the other. It is not self-love, for example, which gives us to make our neighbour's blessing ours,—it scarcely even can be called self-love which first stirs the peaceful mind—it is simply *pleasure*; and the enjoyment may or must accompany all the delightful progress of our moral affections; it is not any *self-love*, reflecting on the *enjoyments* that are thus to be *obtained*.

> Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
> As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;
> The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds;
> Another still, and still another spreads:

Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace,
His country next, and next all human race.
Wide and more wide—the o'erflowings of the mind
Take every creature in of every kind.
Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,
And Heaven beholds its image in his breast.*

In all these cases there is a diffusion of love, indeed, but not of self-love,—a pleasure attending in every stage the progressive benevolence, but affording it only, not producing it; and without which, if it were possible for benevolence to exist without delight, it would still, as before, be the directing spirit of every generous breast.

* Ep. IV. v. 363—372.

LECTURE LX.

1. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS, IN WHICH SOME MORAL FEELING IS NECESSARILY INVOLVED.—2. LOVE—HATE, CONTINUED.—RELATIONS WHICH THEY BEAR TO THE HAPPINESS OF MAN, AND TO THE BENEVOLENCE OF GOD.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I began the consideration of that order of our emotions, in which some *moral relation* is involved; and considered, in the first place, those vivid feelings, which arise in the mind on the contemplation of virtuous or vicious actions, and which, as we shall afterwards find, are truly all that distinguishes these actions to our moral regard, as vice or virtue. At present, however, they are not considered by us ethically, in their relation to conduct,—for, in this light, they are to be reviewed by us afterwards—but merely as mental phenomena—feelings or affections indicative of certain susceptibilities in the mind of being thus affected.

Next to these, in our arrangement, are the emotions of love and hatred,—to the consideration of which, therefore, I proceeded. The remarks which

I made, were chiefly illustrative of a distinction, which is of great importance in the *theory of morals*, with respect to the *pleasure* excited by the objects of our *regard*,—a pleasure, which is, indeed, *inseparable* from the regard,—and without which, therefore, of course, no regard can be felt,—but which is not, *itself*, the cause or *object* of the *affection*. My wish, in these remarks, was to guard you against the sophistry of many philosophers, who seem to think that they have shewn man to be necessarily *selfish*, merely by shewing that it is *delightful* for him to love those, whom it is virtue to love; and whom it would have been *impossible* for him *not to love*, even though no happiness had attended the affection,—as it is impossible for him not to despise or dislike the mean and the profligate, though no pleasure attends the contemplation. A little attention to this opposite class of feelings, which are not more essential to our nature than the others, might have been sufficient to shew, that the delight of loving is not the cause of love. We *despise*, without any pleasure in *despising*, certainly, at least, not on account of any pleasure that can be imagined to be felt in despising. We love, in like manner, not for the pleasure of loving, but on account of the qualities which it is at once delightful for us to love, and impossible for us not to love. We cannot feel the pleasure of loving, unless we have *previously* begun to love; and it is surely as absurd an error, in this as in any other branch of physics, to ascribe to that which is second in a progressive scale, the pro-

duction of that very primary cause, of which itself is the result.

The pleasure which *accompanies* the *benevolent* affections, that has been thus most strangely converted into the cause of those very benevolent affections, which it necessarily presupposes, is a convincing proof, how much the *happiness of his creatures* must have been in the contemplation of Him, who thus adapted their nature as much to the production of good, as to the enjoyment of it. We are formed to be malevolent in certain circumstances, as in other circumstances we are formed to be benevolent; but we are not formed to have equal enjoyment in both. The *benevolent affections*, of course, lead to the actions, by which happiness is *directly diffused*,—there is no moment, at which they may not operate, with *advantage to society*;—and the more *constant* their operation, and the more widely spread, the greater, consequently, is the *result of social good*. The Deity, therefore, has not merely rendered us *susceptible* of these affections—he has made the *continuance* of them delightful, that we may not merely indulge them, but dwell in the indulgence.

> "Thus hath God,
> Still looking to *his own high purpose*, fix'd
> The virtues of his creatures; thus he rules
> The parent's fondness, and the patriot's zeal,
> Thus the warm sense of honour and of shame,
> The vows of gratitude, the faith of love,—
> The joy of human life, the earthly Heaven."

The *moral affections*, which lead to the *infliction of evil*, are occasionally *as necessary*, as the benevolent affections. If vice exist, it must be loathed by us, or we may learn to imitate it. If an individual have injured another individual, there must be *indignation*, to feel the *wrong* which has been done, and a *zeal to avenge it*. The malevolent affections, then, are evidently a part of virtue, as long as vice exists; but they are necessary, only for the occasional purposes of nature, not for her general and permanent interest, in our welfare. If *all* men were uniformly *benevolent*, the earth, indeed, might exhibit an appearance, on the contemplation of which, it would be delightful to dwell. But a world of beings, *universally* and *permanently hating* and *hated*, is a world, that fortunately could *not exist long*; and that, while it existed, could be only a place of torture, in which *crimes* were every moment *punished*, and every moment *renewed*,—or rather, in which crimes, and the mental punishment of crimes, were mingled in one dreadful confusion.

In such circumstances, what is it which we may conceive to be the plan of the Divine Goodness? It is that very plan, which we see at present executed, in our moral constitution. We are made capable of a malevolence, that may be said to be *virtuous*, when it operates, for the terror of injustice, that otherwise would walk, not in darkness, through the world, but in open light, perpetrating its iniquities, without shame or remorse, and perpetrating them with impunity. But, that even this *virtuous malevolence* may not outlast the necessity for it, it is made *painful* for us to be *malevolent*, even in this best sense.

We require to warm our mind, with the repeated image of every thing which has been *suffered* by the *good*; or of every thing which the *good* would *suffer*, in consequence of the impunity of the wicked, before we can bring ourselves to feel delight in the punishment, even of the most wicked, at least when the insolence of power and impunity is gone, and the offender is trembling at the feet of those whom he had injured. There are gentle feelings of mercy, that continually rise upon the heart, in such a case, —feelings that check even the pure and sacred resentment of indignation itself, and make *rigid justice* an *effort*, and, perhaps, one of the most painful efforts of virtue.

"To *love* is to *enjoy*," it has been said, "to *hate* is to *suffer*;" and, in conformity with this remark, the same writer observes, that "though it may not be always *unjust*, it must be always *absurd* to hate, for any length of time, since it is to give him whom we hate, the advantage of occupying us with a painful feeling. Of two enemies, therefore, which is the more unhappy? He, we may always answer, whose hatred is the greater. The mere remembrance of his enemy, is an incessant *uneasiness and agitation*; and he endures, in his long enmity, *far more pain* than he wishes to inflict."

The annexation of *pain* to the emotions, that would lead to the *infliction of pain*, is, as I have said, a very striking proof, that he who formed man, *did not intend* him for purposes of malignity,—as the delight, attached to all our benevolent emotions, may be considered as a *positive* proof, that it was for purposes of *benevolence* that man was formed,—

purposes which make every *generous* exertion more delightful to the active mind itself, than to the individual whose happiness it might have seemed exclusively to promote. By this double influence of every tender affection, as it flows from breast to breast, there is, even in the simplest offices of regard, a continual multiplication of pleasure, when the sole result is joy; and, even when the social kindnesses of life do lead to *sorrow*, they lead to a sorrow which is so tempered with a gentle delight, that the whole mingled emotion has a tenderness, which the heart would be unwilling to relinquish, if it were *absolute indifference*, that was to be given in exchange.

"Who that bears
A human bosom, hath not often felt
How dear are all those ties, which bind our race
In gentleness together, and how sweet
Their force, let Fortune's wayward hand the while
Be kind or cruel? Ask the faithful youth,
Why the cold urn of her whom he long lov'd,
So often fills his arms, so often draws
His lonely footsteps, silent and unseen,
To pay the mournful tribute of his tears?
O! he will tell thee, that the wealth of worlds
Should ne'er seduce his bosom to forego
Those sacred hours, when, stealing from the noise
Of care and envy, sweet remembrance soothes,
With Virtue's kindest looks, his aching breast,
And turns his tears to rapture!"*

Such, then, are the comparative influences on our

* Pleasures of Imagination, second form of the poem, B. II. v. 609—624.

happiness and misery, of the emotions of love and hatred; and it cannot, after such a comparison, seem wonderful, that we should cling to the one of these orders of emotions, almost with the avidity with which we cling to life. It is affection, in some of its forms, which, if I may use so bold a phrase, *animates* even *life itself*, that, without it, scarcely could be worthy of the name. He who is without affection, may exist, indeed, in a populous city, with crowds around him, wherever he may chance to turn; but, even there, he lives *in a desert*, or he lives only among *statues*, that *move* and *speak*, but are incapable of saying any thing to his heart. How *pathetically*, and almost how *sublimely*, does one of the female saints of the Romish Church express the importance of *affection* to *happiness*, when, in speaking of the great enemy of mankind, whose situation might seem to present so many other conceptions of misery, she singles out this one circumstance, and she says,—"How sad is the state of that being *condemned* to *love* nothing!" "If we had been destined to live abandoned to ourselves, on Mount Caucasus, or in the deserts of Africa," says Barthelemi, "perhaps nature would have denied us a feeling heart,—but, if she had given us one, rather than love nothing, that heart would have tamed tygers, and animated rocks." * This, indeed, I may remark, strong as the expression of Barthelemi may seem, is no more than what man truly does. So susceptible is he of kind affection, that he *does* animate, with his regard, the very *rocks*, if only they are rocks that

* *Voyage* du Jeune Anacharsis, Chap. LXXVIII.

have been long familiar to him. The single survivor of a shipwreck, who has spent many dreary years on some island, of which he has been the only human inhabitant, will, in the rapture of deliverance, when he ascends the vessel that is to restore him to society and his country, feel, perhaps, no grief mingling with a joy so overwhelming. But, when the overwhelming emotion has in part subsided,—and, when he sees the island dimly fading from his view, there will be a feeling of grief, that will overcome, for the moment, even the tumultuous joy. The thought that he is never to see again that cave which was so long his home, and that shore which he has so often trod, will rise so sadly to his mind, that it will be to him, before reflection, almost like a momentary wish that he were again in that very *loneliness*, from which to be freed, seemed to him before, like resurrection from the tomb. He has not tamed tygers, indeed, but he will find, in his waking remembrances, and in his dreams, that he has animated *rocks*,—that his heart has not been idle, even when it had no *kindred* object to occupy it,—and that his cave has not been a mere *place of shelter*, but a friend.

"If," says the author of Anacharsis, "we were told, that two strangers, cast by chance on a desert island, had formed a union of regard, the charms of which were a full compensation to them for all the rest of the universe which they had lost,—if we were told, that there existed anywhere a single family, occupied solely in strengthening the ties of blood with the ties of friendship,—if we were told, that there existed, in any corner of the earth, a people who knew no other law than that of loving each

other, no other crime than that of not loving each other sufficiently,—who is there among us, that could dare to *pity* the fate of the two strangers,—that would not wish to belong to the family of friends,—that would not fly to the climate of that happy people? O, mortals, ignorant and unworthy of your destiny," he continues, "it is not necessary for you to cross the seas to discover the happiness. It may exist in every condition, in every time, in every place, *in* you, *around* you,—wherever benevolence is felt."*

After these remarks, on the emotions of love and hatred in general, it will not be necessary to prosecute the investigation of them, with any minuteness, at least, through all their varieties. The emotions, indeed, though classed together under the general name of *love*, are of many varieties; but the difference is a difference of feeling too simple to be made the subject of descriptive definition. I have already, in my general analysis of the emotion, stated its two great elements,—a vivid *pleasure* in the contemplation of the object of regard, and a desire of the happiness of that object; and in the contemplation of various objects, the pleasure may be as different in quality as the corresponding desire is different in degree. The love which we feel for a near relation, may not then, in our maturer years, be exactly the same emotion as that which we feel for a friend; the love which we feel for one relation or friend, *of one character*, not exactly the same as the love which we feel for another relation, perhaps, of the

* Voyage du Jeune Anacharsis, Chap. LXXVIII.

same degree of propinquity, or for another friend of a different character; yet, if we were to attempt to state these differences, in words, we might make them a little more obscure, but we could not make them more intelligible.

I shall not attempt, therefore, to define what is really indefinable. The love which we feel for our parents, our friends, our country, is known better by these mere phrases, than by any *description* of the variety of the feelings themselves; as the difference of what we mean by the *sweetness of honey*, and the *sweetness of sugar*, is known better by these *mere names of the particular substances* which excite the feelings, than by any description of the difference of the sweetnesses; or rather, in the one way, it is capable of being made known to those who have ever tasted the two substances; in the other way, no words which human art could employ, if the substances themselves are not named, would be able to make known the distinctive shades. Who is there, who could describe to another the sensations of smell which he receives from a rose, a violet, a sprig of jassmine, or of honeysuckle, though, in using these names, I have already conveyed to your mind a complete notion of this very difference.

It is not my *intention*, then, to give you any *description* of the varieties of emotion, comprehended under the general terms of *love* and *hate*,—or, to speak more accurately, it *is not in my power*. To your own mind, the greater number of these must already be sufficiently familiar. A few very brief *remarks* on the general guardianship of affection,

under which man is placed, and on the happiness of which it is productive, are all which I shall attempt to offer to you.

The helplessness of man at birth, and for the first years of life, is what must have powerfully impressed every one,—however unapt to moralize on the contrasts of the *present*, and the *past*, and the *future*, —those contrasts, which Nature is incessantly exhibiting, not more strikingly, in what we term the accidents of *individual fortune*, or the dreadful revolutions of nations, which occur only at distant intervals, than in the *phenomena*, which form the regular display of her power, in every generation of mankind, and every individual of every generation. That glorious animal, who is to rule all other animals,— to invade their deepest recesses,—to drive the most ferocious from their dens, and to make the strength of the strongest only an instrument of more complete subjection,—*what is he at his birth?*—A creature, that seems incapable of anything, but of tears and cries,—as Pliny so forcibly pictures him in a few words, "*Flens animal cæteris imperaturum.*"* If we were to consider him, as abandoned to himself, we might, indeed, say, to use a still stronger phrase of Cicero, that man is born not of a *mother*, but of a *stepmother*. "Hominem, non ut à matri, sed à novercâ natum, corpore *rudo*, fragili et infirmo, animo autem anxio ad molestias, in quo tamen inesset obrutus quidam divinus ignis." Is the divine spark,

* Lib. VII. proem.

which seems scarcely to gleam through that feeble frame, to be quenched in it for ever? It is feebleness, indeed, which we behold:—but the Creator of that which seems so feeble, was the Omnipotent. That Power, which is omnipotent to bless, has thrown no helpless outcast on the world. Before it brought him into existence, it *provided* what was to be strength, and more than strength, to the weakness which was to be entrusted to the ready protection. There are beings, who *love him*, before their eyes have seen what they love,—who expect, with all the affection of long intimacy, or rather with an affection, to which that of the most cordial friendship is indifference and coldness, that unsuspecting object of their regard, who is to receive their cares, without knowing of whom they are the cares; but who is to reward every labour and anxiety, by the mere smile, that almost unconsciously answers their smile, or the unintentional caress, to which their love is to affix so tender a meaning. How beautiful is the arrangement, which has thus adapted to each other, the feebleness of the weak, and the fondness of the strong, in which the happiness of those who require protection, and of those who are able to give protection, is equally secured; and man, deriving from his early wants the social affections, which afterwards bind him to his race, is made the most powerful of earthly beings, by that very imbecility, which seemed to mark him as born only to suffer and to perish!

The suddenness of the change, which, at this in-

teresting period, takes place, in many instances, in the whole *character* and mode of conduct of the mother, is as remarkable, as the force of the fondness itself. The affection, which the child requires, is not an affection of a *passive* sort; it is one which must *watch* and *endure fatigues*, and the privation of many accustomed pleasures. But nature, who, in adaptation to the wants of the new animated being, has provided for it the food best suited for its little frame, by a change in the very bodily functions of the mother, has provided equally for that corresponding change, which is necessary in the maternal mind. "How common is it," says Dr Reid, "to see a young woman, in the gayest period of life, who has spent her days in mirth, and her nights in profound sleep, without solicitude or care, all at once transformed into the careful, the solicitous, the watchful nurse of her dear infant, doing nothing by day but gazing upon it, and serving it in the meanest offices,—by night, depriving herself of sound sleep for months, that it may lie safe in her arms. Forgetful of herself, her whole care is centered in this little object.—Such a sudden transformation of her whole habits, and occupation, and turn of mind, if we did not see it every day, would appear a more wonderful metamorphose, than any that Ovid has described."*

Such is that species of love, which constitutes parental affection,—an affection, however, that is not to fade, with the wants to which it was so necessary,

* On the Active Powers, Essay III. c. iv.

but is to extend its regard, with delightful reciprocities of kindness, over the whole life of its object,—or rather is not to terminate with this mortal life, but only to begin *then* a *new series* of wishes, that extend themselves through immortality. Affection is not a task that finishes, when the work which it was to accomplish is done. The dead body of their child, over which the parents bend in anguish, is not to them a *release* from cares *imposed on them.* It awakes in them, love not *less*, but more *vivid.* It speaks to them of him, who still exists to their remembrance, and their hope of future meeting, as he existed before, to all the happiness of mutual presence. On their own bed of death, if *he* is the survivor, they have still some anxieties, even of this earth, for him. They look, with devout confidence, to that God, who is the happiness of those who are admitted, after the toils of life, to his divine presence; but they look to him also, as the happiness of those, whose earthly career is not yet accomplished,—the averter of *perils*, to which *they* can no longer be exposed,—the source of consolation in *griefs*, which *they* can no longer feel. The heaven, of which they think, is not the heaven, that *is* at the moment at which they ascend to it, but the heaven which is to be, when, at least, *one other inhabitant* is added to it.

These are the delightful emotions of parental regard, which far more than repay every parental anxiety. But does the child enjoy their protecting influence, without any return of love? His little heart,—the heart of him, who is perhaps afterwards

to have the same parental feelings,—is not so cold and insensible. His love, indeed, has not the *intensity* of interest,—far less the reasoning foresight,—which distinguishes the zealous fondness of that unwearied guardianship, on which he depends. But it is a *reflection* from the same blessed sunshine to his own delighted bosom. It is this, which, in childhood, makes even obedience,—the most powerful, perhaps, of all things, when the reason of the command is not known,—almost as delightful, as the freedom which is restrained; and which, in maturer life, continues a reverence, which the proud mind of man refuses to every other created being. It is to the feeling of this sacred and paramount regard, that we are to trace the peculiar *horror* attached in every nation to *parricide.* Murder, indeed, in every form, is horrible to our conception; but the murder of a *parent* is a *crime,* of which we *mark* the occurrence with the same astonishment, with which we mark and record some fearful prodigy of nature.

The fraternal affection is, in truth, in its origin, only another form of that general susceptibility of friendship, with which nature has endowed us. We cannot live long with any one, in the constant interchange of social offices, without forming an attachment, which is altogether independent of the expectation of the benefits, that may arise from a continuance of the intercourse;—and what we feel for *every other playmate,* with whom we meet only occasionally, must surely be felt, still more, for those, who have partaken almost of every pleasure, which we have enjoyed, since we entered into life, and who,

in all the little adventures, of years that have *relatively*, as *many*, or even *more* important incidents, than the years which are occupied only with a few great projects, have been the companions of our toils, and perils, and successes. In the case of fraternal friendship, too, there is the strong additional circumstance, that, in loving a brother, we love one who is dear to those, to whom our liveliest affections have been already given. We cannot love a friend, without taking some interest in whatever may befall the *friends* of our friends; and we cannot love our parents, therefore, without feeling some additional sympathy with those, whose happiness we know would be happiness to *them*, and whose *distresses misery*. This *reflection* from our filial fondness, however, is but a *circumstance in addition*; the *great source* of the *fraternal regard*, as I have already said, is in that general susceptibility of our nature, to which we owe all our friendships—that susceptibility, which has made *brothers* of mankind, at least of all the nobler individuals of mankind,—though their common passions might seem to oppose them in endless rivalries. The same affection, which, in the nursery, attracted its two little inhabitants, to look on the same objects,—to mix in the same sports,—to form the same plans,—not, indeed, for the next *year* or *month*, but for the next *hour* or *minute*, is that, which, in a different period of life, augments, and perpetuates, and extends to *others*, the same feelings of social regard,—a regard, which

> "Push'd to social, to divine,
> Gives thee to make thy neighbour's blessing thine.

Is this too little for thy boundless heart?
Extend it—let thy enemies have part.
Grasp the whole worlds of reason, life, and sense,
In one close system of benevolence:—
Happier as kinder, in whate'er degree,
And height of *bliss*, but height of charity."*

Such is *man*,—the parent, the child, the brother, the citizen,—the member of the great community of all who live. There is still another aspect, however, in which our susceptibilities of the emotions of love may be considered; and that which has, in common language, almost *absorbed* the name,—the affection which the sexes bear to each other—an affection, on which, in its mere physical relation to the preservation of the species, all our other emotions may be said indirectly to depend, and of which the *moral relations*, that alone are to be considered by us, are as powerful, in their influence on the conduct, as they are general in their empire, and not more productive of hope or misery, than they are of virtue, or of vice.

In considering the influences of this relation on human happiness, we are not to have regard merely to those emotions which are excited, in the individuals who feel that exclusive delight in each others society, and that reciprocal admiration and confidence, the charm of which constitutes the moral part of what is called love. These feelings, indeed, are truly valuable in themselves, as a part of the happi-

* Essay on Man, Ep. IV. v. 353—360.

ness of the world, and would still be most valuable, even though no other beneficial influence were to flow from them. But, precious as they are in this respect, we are not to regard them as extending only to the individuals themselves, and beginning and ceasing with their enjoyments. The chief value of this relation is diffused over all mankind. It is to be traced in that *character of refinement* which it has given to society, and with which love extends its delightful and humanizing influence, even to those who may pass through life, without feeling its more direct and immediate charms. It is, in this respect, like that sunshine, which even the blind enjoy, in the warmth which it produces, though they are incapable of distinguishing the light from which it flows.

The system of gentler manners, once produced in this way, may diffuse the influence, in a great degree, without a renewal of the cause which gave rise to it; and yet, even at present, when *men* live long *together*, without much intercourse with the gentler sex, we are soon able to discover some proof, of the absence of that influence, which is not necessary only for *raising* man from savage life, but for saving him from *relapsing into* it.

That the female character, however, may have its just influence, it is necessary that the female character should be respected. When woman is valued, only as subservient to the animal pleasures of man, or to the multiplication of his race, there may be as much fondness as is involved in sensual profligacy, there might be a dreadful mixture of momentary

tenderness with habitual tyranny and servility; but this is not love, and therefore not the moral influence of love—not that equal and reciprocal communication of sentiments and wishes,

> "When thought meets thought, ere from the lips it start,
> And each warm wish springs *mutual* from the heart."

"The empire of women," says an eloquent foreigner, "is not their's, because men have willed it, but because it is the will of nature. Miserable must be the age in which this empire is lost, and in which the judgments of women are counted as nothing by man. Every people in the ancient world, that can be said to have had morals, has respected the sex,—Sparta, Germany, Rome. At Rome, the exploits of the victorious generals were honoured by the grateful voices of the *women;* on every public calamity, *their* tears were a public offering to the gods. In either case, their vows and their sorrows were thus consecrated as the most solemn judgments of the state. It is to them, that all the great revolutions of the republic are to be traced. By a woman, Rome acquired liberty,—by a woman, the Plebeians acquired the consulate,—by a woman, finished the decemviral tyranny,—by *women*, when the city was trembling with a vindictive exile at its gates, it was saved from that destruction which no other influence could avert. To *our* eyes, indeed, accustomed to find in everything some cause or pretence for mockery, a procession of this sort might seem to present

only a subject of derision; and, in the altered state of manners of our capitals, some cause of such a feeling might perhaps truly be found, in the different aspect of the procession itself. But compose it of Roman women, and you will have the eyes of every Volscian, and the heart of Coriolanus."

In the whole progress of life, in its permanent connections, and even in the casual intercourse of society, so much of conduct must have relation to the other sex, and be regulated, in a great measure, by the views which we have been led to form, with respect to them, that there is scarcely a subject on which just views seem to me of so much importance to a young and ingenuous mind. In such a mind, a respect for the excellencies of woman, is, in its practical consequences, almost another form of respect for virtue itself.

In estimating the character of the other sex, we are too apt to measure ourselves with them, only in those respects, in which we arrogate an indisputable superiority, and to forget the circumstances, from which chiefly that superiority is derived, if even there *be* as great a superiority as we suppose, in the respects in which we may, perhaps falsely, lay claim to it. We think, in such an estimate, not so much of the peculiar merits which they possess, as of peculiar merits which we flatter ourselves with the belief of possessing. We forget those *tender virtues*, which are so lovely in themselves, and to which we owe half the virtue of which we boast. We forget the *compassion*, which is so ready to soothe our sor-

rows, and without which, perhaps, to awaken and direct our pity to others, we should scarcely have known that the relief of misery was one of our duties, or rather one of the noblest privileges of our nature. We forget the *patience*, which bears so well every grief, but those which ourselves occasion, and which feels these deepest sorrows with intenser suffering, only from that value, above all other possessions, which is attached to our regard. We forget those intellectual graces, which are the chief embellishment of our life, and which, shedding over it at once a gaiety and a tenderness, which nothing else could diffuse, soften down the asperities of our harsher intellect. But, forgetting all these excellencies which are the excellencies of others, we are far from forgetting the scholastic acquisitions of languages or science, which seem to us doubly important, because they are our own—acquisitions that, in some distinguished instances, indeed, may confer glory on the nature that is capable of them, but they, in many cases, leave no other effect on the mind, than a *pride of sex*, which the inadequacy of these supposed means of paramount distinction, should rather have converted into respect for those, who, almost without study, or, at least, with far humbler opportunities, have learned from their own *hearts* what is virtuous, and from their *own genius*, whatever is most important to be known.

Even with respect to those studies, which we have reserved almost as an exclusive privilege of our sex, we should remember, that the privation, on the part

of woman, is a sacrifice that is made to a system of general manners, which, whether truly essential or not, we have at least chosen to regard as essential to our happiness. We impose on them duties, that are, perhaps, incompatible with severe study—we require of them the highest excellence in many elegant arts, —to excel in which, if *we* too were to attempt it, would be the labour of half our life—we require of them even the charm of a sort of delicate ignorance, as if ignorance itself were a grace;—and then, with most inconsistent severity, we affect to regard them with contempt, because they have fulfilled the very duties imposed on them, and have charmed us with all the excellencies, and perhaps, too, with some of the defects, which we required. If they err, in being as ignorant of the choral prosody of the Greeks, and of the fluxionary calculus of the moderns, as the greater number even of the well-educated of our own sex,—let us at least allow them the privilege of speaking of *anapæsts* and *infinitesimals*, without forfeiting our regard,—before we smile at ignorance, which ourselves have produced, and which, if we could remove with a wish, there are few, perhaps, even of those who affect to despise it, who would not tremble at the comparative light in which they would themselves have to appear.

In the course of your life, you must often mingle with the frivolous of our own sex, who, knowing little more, know at least, and can repeat, as their only literature, some of the trite traditionary sarcasms, which have been tediously repeated against

women;—though they have had no difficulty in forgetting the far more numerous sarcasms, which even men have pointed against the vices of men. But, though minds, which women would despise and blush to resemble, may speak contemptuously of excellence, which they cannot hope to equal,—it is only from the contemptible, in such a case, that you will hear the expression of contempt; and the real, or affected disdain of such minds, is, perhaps, not less glorious to the character of the sex which they deride, than the respect which that character never fails to obtain, from those who alone are qualified to appreciate it, and whose admiration alone is honour.

To the dissolute, indeed, who are fond of associating with the lowest of the sex, and who, in their conception of female excellence, can form no brighter pictures in their mind, than of the *inmates* of a brothel, or of those whom a brothel might admit as its inmates,—woman *may* seem a being like themselves, and be a subject of insulting mockery, in the coarse laughter and drunkenness of the feast; but the mockery, in such a case, is descriptive of the life and habits of the *deriders*, more than of the *derided*. It is not so much the *expression of contempt*, as the *confession of vice*.

The *respect*, which he feels for the virtues of woman, may thus be considered almost as a *test* of the virtues of *man*. He *is*, and must be, in a great measure, what he *wishes* the companions of his domestic hours to be—noble, if he wish *them* to be dignified—frivolous, if he wish them to be triflers—

and far more abject than the victims of his capricious favour, if, with the power of enjoying their free and lasting affection, he would yet sacrifice whatever love has most delightful, and condemn *them* to a slavery of the dismal and dreary influence, of which he is *himself* to be the *slave*.

LECTURE LXI.

I. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS, INVOLVING NECESSARILY SOME MORAL FEELING.—2. LOVE, AND HATE, CONCLUDED.—3. SYMPATHY WITH THE HAPPINESS AND SORROW OF OTHERS.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I considered the various affections comprehended under the general names of *love* and *hatred*, both with respect to their nature, *as emotions*, and to the relations which they bear to the happiness of man, and consequently to the provident benevolence of that Mighty Being, who has created us to be happy,—who, in rendering us susceptible of these opposite emotions, has not merely blessed us, but protected also the very blessings which he gave, bestowing on us the kind affections, as the source of our enjoyment, and the affections of hatred, as our security against aggression.

Of the benevolent affections, in the first place, we saw how largely they contribute to happiness, by the *pleasure which they directly yield*, and, still more, by the pleasure which they diffuse over every other

enjoyment, or with which they temper even *affliction* itself, till it almost cease to be an evil. The most sensual, who despise the pleasures of the understanding, and those delights, which have been so truly called "*the luxury* of doing good," must still, in their *petty luxuries*, have an affection of some sort, or at least the *semblance* of affection, to diffuse over their indulgences, the chief part of the little pleasure which they seem to yield. To give a taste to their costly food, they must collect smiles around the table, even though there be at the heart a sad conviction, that the smiles are only the *mimicry of kindness*. So essential however, is *kindness* to *happiness*, that even this very mimicry of it is more than can be abandoned; and, if all the gay faces of the guests around the festive board could, in an instant, be converted into statues, in that very instant, the delight of him, who spread the magnificence for the eyes of others, and caught a sort of shadowy gaiety from that cheerfulness, which had at least the appearance of social regard, would cease, as if he, too, had lost even the common sensibilities of life. He would still see, on every side, attendants ready to obey a *word*, or a very look,—the same luxurious delicacies would be before him, but there would no longer be the same appetite, that could feel them to be luxuries; and the enjoyment received,—if any enjoyment were received,—would be far less than that of the labourer, in his coarser meal, when there is only simple fare upon the board, but *affection* in every *heart* that is round it, and *social gladness* in every *eye*.

So consolatory is regard, and so tranquillizing, in all the agitations of life, except the very horrors of guilty passion, and the remorse by which these are pursued, that he who has one heart to share his affliction, though he may still have feelings to which we must continue to give the name of *sorrow, cannot* be miserable; while he, who has no heart, that would care whether he were suffering or *enjoying*, *alive* or *dead*,—and who has himself no regard to the suffering or enjoyment even of a single individual, may be rich, indeed, in the external means of happiness, but he cannot be rich in *happiness*, which external things may *promote*,—but are as little capable of *producing*, as the incense on the altar of giving out its aromatic odours, where there is no warmth to kindle it into fragrance. The blind possessor of some ample inheritance, who is *led* through groves, and over lawns, where he sees no part of that loveliness, which every *other* eye is so quick to perceive, and who, as he walks in darkness, amid the brightest colours of nature, has merely the pleasure of thinking, that whatever his foot has pressed is *his own*,—enjoys his splendid domains, with a gratification very nearly similar to that of the haughty lord of possessions, perhaps still more ample, who, without any mere visual infirmity, is able to walk, *unled*, amid his own groves and lawns, which he measures with a cold and selfish eye, but who walks among them *unloving and unloved*, blind to all that sunshine of the heart, which is for ever diffusing, even on earth, a celestial loveliness,—a loveliness, to which there are hearts and spirits, as insensible as there

eyes, that are incapable of distinguishing the common radiance of Heaven. "Poor is the friendless master of a world," it has been truly said, and there is, perhaps, no curse so dreadful as that which would render man wholly insensible of affection, even though it were to leave him all the cumbrous wealth of a thousand empires:—

"Vivat Pacuvius quæso, vel Nestora totum,
Possideat quantum rapuit Nero, meritibus aurum
Exæquet—nec amet quenquam, nec ametur ab ullo!" *

It is a bold, but a happy expression of St Bernard, illustrative of the power of affection,—that the soul, or the principle of life, within us, may be more truly said to *exist*, when it *loves*, than when it merely *animates*. "Anima magis est ubi *amat*, quam ubi *animat*." The benevolent affections expand and multiply our being,—they make us live with as many souls as there are living objects of our love, and, in this diffusion of more than wishes, confer upon a single individual, the happiness of the world. If there be any one, whose high station, and honour, and power, appear to us covetable, ambition will tell us, to labour, and to watch, and to think neither of the happiness nor unhappiness of others,—or at least to think of them only as instruments of our exaltation, till we arrive, at last, at equal or superior dignity. This it will tell us loudly; and, to *some* minds, it will whisper, that there are means of speedier ad-

* Juvenal. Sat. xii. v. 128—130.

vancement, that they have only to sacrifice a few virtues, or assume a few vices, to deceive, and defame, and betray,—or, that, if they cannot rise themselves, by these means, they can at least bring down to their own level, or beneath it, the merit that is odious to them. The dignity which we thus covet, and for the attainment of which, Ambition would urge us to so many anxieties and struggles, and perhaps, too, to so much guilt, nature confers on us, by a much more simple process, and a process which, far from leading into vice, is itself the exercise of virtue. She has only to give us a sincere and lively friendship for him who possesses it; and all *his* enjoyments are ours. Our soul, to use St Bernard's phrase, exists when it loves; and it exists, in all the enjoyments, of him whom it loves.

If the *benevolent* affections be so important, as sources of happiness, the malevolent affections, we found, were not less important parts of our mental constitution, as the *defence* of happiness against the injustice which otherwise would every moment be invading it;—the emotions of the individual injured, being to the injurer a certainty, that his crime will not be without *one* interested in avenging it; and the united emotions of *mankind*, as concurring with this individual interest of retribution, being almost the certainty of vengeance itself. If vice can perform these ravages in the moral world, which we see at present,—what would have been the desolation, if there had been no motives of terror, to restrain the guilty arm,—if frauds and oppressions, which now work in secret, could have

come boldly forth into the great community of mankind, secure of approbation in every eye, or at least of no look of abhorrence, or shuddering at their very approach. It is, because man is rendered capable of hatred, that crimes, which escape the law and the judge, have their punishment in the terror of the guilty. "Fortune," it has been truly said, "frees many from *vengeance*, but it cannot free them from *fear*,—it cannot free them from the knowledge of that *general disgust and scorn*, which nature has so deeply fixed in all mankind, for the crimes which they have perpetrated. Amid the security of a thousand concealments, they cannot think themselves sufficiently concealed from that hatred, which is ever ready to burst upon them; for conscience is still with them, like a treacherous informer, pointing them out to themselves."—"Multos fortuna pœnâ liberat, metû neminem. Quare? quia infixa nobis ejus rei aversatio est, quam natura damnavit. Ideo namquam fides latendi fit, etiam latentibus, quia coarguit illos conscientia, et *ipsos sibi* ostendit." *

The emotions, to which I am next to direct your attention, are those, by which, instantly, as if by a sort of contagion, we become partakers of the vivid feelings of others, whether pleasing or painful. They are general affections of *sympathy*,—a term, which expresses this participation of both species of feelings, though, in common language, it is usually applied, more particularly to the interest which we

* Seneca, Epist. 97.

take in sorrow. By some philosophers, indeed, we have been said to be incapable of this participation, except of feelings of that sadder kind;—though the denial of this sympathy with happiness—a denial so unfavourable and so false to the social nature of man,—is surely the result only of narrow views, and imperfect analysis. Nor, is it difficult to discover the circumstances which may have tended to mislead them. The state of happiness is a state, which we are so desirous of feeling, and so readily affect to feel, even when we truly feel it *not*, that our participation of it becomes less remarkable, being expressed merely in the same way, as the common courtesies of society require us to express ourselves, even when we are feeling no peculiar satisfaction. If the face must, at any rate, be dressed in smiles at meeting, and retain a certain number of these smiles, with an occasional smile more or less, according to the turn of the conversation, during the whole of a long interview, the *real* complacency which is felt in the pleasures of others, is not marked, because the *air* of complacency had been assumed before. All this is so well understood, in that state of strange simulation and dissimulation, which constitutes *artificial politeness*, that a smile of welcome is as little considered to be a certain evidence of gratification at heart, as the common forms of humility, which close a letter of business, are understood to signify truly, that the writer is the very humble and most obedient servant of him to whom the letter is addressed. Joy, then,—that is to say, the appearance of joy,—may be regarded as the common dress of society,

and real complacency is thus as little remarkable, as a well-fashioned coat in a drawing-room. Let us conceive a single ragged coat to appear in the brilliant circle, and all eyes will be instantly fixed on it. Even Beauty itself, till the buz of astonishment is over, will, for the moment, scarcely attract a single gaze, or Wit a single listener. Such, with respect to the general dress of the social mind, is *grief.* It is something, for the very appearance of which we are not *prepared.* A face of smiles is what we meet constantly; a face of sorrow, the fixed and serious look, the low or faultering tone, the very silence, the tear,—are *foreign,* as it were, to the outward scene of things in which we exist. We see evidence, in this case, that something has happened, to change the general aspect; while the look, and the voice of gaiety, as they are the look and the voice of every hour, indicate to us only the *presence* of the individual, and not any peculiar affection of his mind. It is not wonderful, therefore, that the appearance of grief, as the *more unusual* of the two, should absorb to itself, in common language, a name, which may originally have been significant alike of the participation of grief and joy. It must be remembered, too, that *joy,* though delighting in sympathy, does not stand in *need* of this sympathy, so much as sorrow. In diffusing cheerfulness, we seem rather to *give* to others, than to *receive;* while, in the sympathy of grief, which we excite, we feel every *look* and *tone* of kindred *sorrow,* as so much *given to us.* It is, as if we were lightened of a part of our burthen; and we cannot feel the relief, with-

out feeling gratitude to the compassionate heart, that has lessened our affliction, by dividing it with us. It is not merely, therefore, because the appearance of *grief* is more unusual, that we have affixed to this appearance a peculiar language, or at least apply to it more readily the terms, that are significant also of other appearances,—but, in some degree, also, because the sympathy of those who *sorrow* with us, is of far more *value*, than the sympathy of those who merely share our rejoicing, and therefore dwells more readily and lastingly in our remembrance.

It is not more true, however, that we weep with those who weep, than that we rejoice with those who rejoice. There is a charm in general gladness, that steals upon us without our perceiving it; and, if we have no cause of sorrow, it is sufficient for our momentary happiness, that we be in the company of the happy. Who is there, of such fixed melancholy, as not to have felt, innumerable times, this delight that arises, without any cause, but the delight which has preceded it; when we are happy for hours, and on looking back on these hours of happiness, can discover nothing, but our own happiness, and the happiness of others, which have been reflected back, and again, from each to each. So strong is this sympathetic tendency, that we not merely share the gaiety of the gay, but rejoice also with inanimate things, to which we have given a cheerfulness, that does not, and cannot belong to them. There are, in the changeful aspects of nature, so many analogies to the emotions of living beings, that in animating poetically, what exhibits to us these analogies, we

scarcely feel, till we reflect, that we are using metaphors; and that the clear and sunny sky, for example, is as little cheerful, as that atmosphere of fogs and darkness, through which the sun shines only enough to shew us, *how thick the gloom must be*, which has resisted all the penetrating splendours of his beams. When nature is thus once animated by us, it is not wonderful, if we sympathize with the living, that we should, for the moment, sympathize with *it* too, as with some living thing. It is this sympathy, with a cheerfulness which we have ourselves created, that constitutes a great part of that "moral delight and joy," which is so well described, as "able to drive all sadness but despair." In the poem of *The Seasons*, accordingly, the influence of Spring is, with not less truth than poetic beauty, supposed to be felt chiefly by those, whose *moral* sympathies are the most lively.

"When Heaven and Earth, as if contending, vie
To raise his being, and serene his soul,
Can *Man* forbear to join the general smile
Of Nature?—Can fierce passions vex his breast,
When every gale is peace, and every grove
Is melody?—Hence from the bounteous walks
Of flowery Spring, ye sordid sons of earth,
Hard, and unfeeling of another's woe,
Or only lavish to yourselves;—away!—
But come, ye generous minds, in whose wide thought,
Of all his works, creative Bounty burns
With warmest beam; and on your open front,
And liberal eye, sits,—from his dark retreat,
Invoking modest Want.—Nor, till invoked,
Can restless Goodness wait; your active search
Leaves no cold wintry corner unexplored;

Like silent-working Heaven, surprising oft
The lonely heart with unexpected good.
For you the roving spirit of the wind
Blows Spring abroad; for you the teeming clouds
Descend in gladsome plenty o'er the world;—
And the Sun sheds his kindest rays for you,
Ye flower of human race! In these green days,
Reviving sickness lifts her languid head,
Life flows afresh, and young-eyed Health exalts
The whole creation round! Contentment walks
The sunny glade, and feels an inward bliss
Spring o'er his mind, beyond the power of kings
To purchase. Pure serenity apace
Induces thought, and contemplations still.
By swift degrees, the love of Nature works
And warms the bosom; till, at last, sublimed
To rapture, and enthusiastic heat,
We feel the present Deity, and taste
The joy of God, to see a happy world."*

In the very pleasing Ode to May, which forms one of the few relics of the genius of West, there is a thought, in accordance with this general sympathy of nature, which expresses, with great force, that animating influence of which I speak. After invoking the tardy May to resume her reign,

"With balmy breath and flowery tread,
Rise from thy soft embrosial bed,
Where, in Elysian slumber bound,
Embowering myrtles veil thee round,"

he describes the impatience of all nature for her accustomed presence, and concludes with an image,

* V. 866—900.

which his friend Gray justly termed "bold, but not too bold,"—

> "Come then, with Pleasure at thy side,
> Diffuse thy vernal spirit wide;
> Create, where'er thou turn'st thine eye,
> Peace, plenty, love, and harmony;—
> Till every being share its part,
> Till heaven and earth be glad at heart."*

In a fine morning of that delightful season, amid sunshine and fragrance, and the thousand voices of joy, that make the air one universal song of rapture, who is there that does not feel, as if heaven and earth were *truly glad at heart*, and who does not sympathize with *Nature*, as if with some living being diffusing happiness, and rejoicing in the happiness which it diffuses?

We sympathize, then, even with the imaginary cheerfulness, which ourselves create in things, that are as incapable of cheerfulness, as of sorrow; and still more do we sympathize with living gladness, when it does not arise from a cause so disproportioned to the violence of the emotion, as to force us to pause and measure the absurdity. I have already said, that we seem to sympathize less with the pleasures of others, than we truly do; because the real sympathy is lost in that constant air of cheerfulness, which it is a part of good manners to assume. If the

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* Stanza ii. v. 3—6, and Stanza v. preserved in Letter V. of Sect. iii. of Memoirs of Gray.—*Matthias' Edit.*

laws of politeness required of us to *assume*, in society, an appearance of *sadness*, as they now require from us an appearance of some slight degree of gaiety, or, at least, of a disposition to be gay, it is probable, that we should then remark any sympathy with gladness, as we now remark particularly any sympathy with sorrow; and we should certainly, then, use the *general name*, to express the *former* of these, as the more extraordinary,—in the same way, as we now use it particularly to express the feelings of *commiseration*.

Whatever may be the comparative *tendencies* of our nature, however, to the *participation* of the *gay* and *sad* emotions of those around us, there can be no doubt as to the *double* tendency. We rejoice with those who rejoice, merely because they are rejoicing;—and, without any misfortune of our own, we feel a sadness, at the very aspect of affliction in those around us, and shrink and shudder, on the application to *them* of any cause of pain, which we know cannot reach *ourselves*.

Many of the phenomena of sympathy, I have little doubt, are referable to the same laws, to which we have traced the common phenomena of *suggestion* or *association*. It may be considered as a necessary consequence of these very laws, that the sight of any of the common *symbols* of internal feeling, should recal to us the feeling itself, in the same way as a portrait, or rather, as the alphabetic name of our friend, recals to us the conception of our *friend* himself. Some faint and shadowy sadness we undoubtedly should feel, therefore, when the external

signs of sadness were before us,—some greater cheerfulness on the appearance of cheerfulness in others,—even though we had no peculiar susceptibility of sympathizing emotion, distinct from the mere general tendencies of suggestion. To these general tendencies, I am inclined, particularly, to refer the external involuntary signs of our sympathy,—the shrinking of our own limbs, for example, when we see the knife in any surgical operation, about to be applied to the limb of another,—the contortions of body with which the mob regard the feats of a rope-dancer, when they throw themselves into the postures that would be necessary for counteracting their own tendency to fall, if they were in the situation observed by them. Whatever state of mind, in the direction of our muscular movements, may be necessary for producing these instant postures, is associated with the *feeling* of peril, which the mind would have in the situation observed; and *this feeling* is suggested by the *attitude* in *others*, that may be considered as an *external sign of the feeling*. That the mere conception is sufficient for producing these muscular movements, without the actual presence of any one with whose movements our own may be thought to accord, by some mysterious harmony, is shewn by cases, in which etherial communications, and vibrations, and every foreign cause of sympathy that can be imagined by the most extravagant lover of hypothesis, must be allowed to be absent, because there is no foreign object of sympathy whatever; in which we may be said, almost without absurdity, to *sympathize* with *ourselves*,—when we *shudder*, indeed,

as if sympathizing, but shudder at a mere *thought*. Thus, in looking down from a precipice, we shrink back, as we gaze on the dreadful abyss which would receive us if we were to make a single false step, or if the crumbling soil on which we tread were to betray our footing. The *notion of our fall* is readily suggested by the aspect of the abyss, and of the narrow spot which separates us from it,—*this* notion of our fall, of course, suggests the feelings which would arise at such a dreadful moment; and *these* again produce, in the same manner, that consecutive state of mind, whatever it may be, on which the bodily movements of shrinking depend. We first have the simple conception of the fall,—we then have, in some degree, the feelings that would attend the beginning fall,—we then, having this lively image of peril, shrink back to save ourselves from that which seems to us more real, because, in harmony with the whole scene of terror before us, which presents to us the same aspect that would be present to us, if what we merely imagine were actually at that very moment taking place. Such is the series of phenomena that produce one of the most uneasy states in which the mind can exist; a state, which I may suppose you all to have experienced in some degree, before the repetition of these giddy views, with impunity, has counteracted the giddiness itself, by rendering the feeling of *security* so habitual, as to rise instantly, and be a constant part of the whole complex state of mind.

But, though I conceive that a great part of what is called *sympathy*, is truly referable to the common

laws of *suggestion*, that, by producing certain conceptions, produce also, indirectly, the emotions that are consequent on these,—and, though it is possible that not the chief part only, but the whole, may flow from these simple laws, I am far from asserting, that all its phenomena depend on these alone. On the contrary, I am inclined to think, that there is a peculiar susceptibility of this reflex emotion in certain minds, by which, even when the *laws of suggestion*, and the consequent images which rise to the mind, are similar, the sympathy, as a subsequent emotion, is more or less vivid; since there is no *particular law of suggestion*, unless we form one for this particular case, the force of which, in any greater degree, seems to accompany, with equal and corresponding proportion, the more lively compassion; but our *sympathies* are *stronger* and *weaker*, with *all possible varieties of suggestion*, in every other respect. It would be vain, however, if there truly be such a peculiar susceptibility, to attempt any nicer inquiry, in the hope of discovering original elements, which are obviously beyond the power of our analysis, or of fixing the precise point, at which the influence of ordinary suggestion ceases, and the influence of what is peculiar in the tendency to sympathy, if there be any peculiar influence, begins.

One most important distinction, however, it is necessary to make, to save you from an error, into which the use of a *single term* for two successive feelings, and, I may add, the general imperfect analysis of philosophers, might otherwise lead you.

What is commonly termed *pity*, or *compassion*,

or *sympathy*, even when the circumstances which merely lead to the sympathy, are deducted from the emotion itself, is not one simple state, but two successive states of mind,—the *feeling* of the *sorrow* of *others*, and the desire of *relieving* it. The former of these is that which leads me to rank pity as an immediate emotion,—the latter, which is a separate affection of the mind, subsequent to the other, and easily distinguished from it, we should rank, if it were to be considered *alone*, with our other desires, which, in like manner, arise from some view of good to be attained, or of evil to be removed.

After this analysis of the emotion of pity into its constituent elements, a lively feeling participant of the sorrow of others, and the desire of relief to that sorrow, a desire, which, in the same circumstances, may be greater or less, as the mind is more benevolent, it can scarcely fail to occur to you, that the first of these elements is, *as mere grief*, an emotion of the same species with the primary grief with which we are said to sympathize, or with any other grief which we are capable of feeling,—a form, in short, of that general sadness which has been already considered by us. And, *as a mere state or affection of the mind*, considered without regard to the circumstances which produce it, or the circumstances which follow it, I confess, that there does not seem to me anything peculiar in the grief itself, of pity, when *separated*, by such an analysis, from all *thought* of the primary sufferer, whose sorrow we feel to have been reflected on us, and from the consequent *desire*

of affording him aid. But, though the elementary feeling itself may be similar,—the circumstances in which it arises, and the circumstances which accompany it, when, without any direct cause of pain, we yet catch pain, as it were, by a sort of contagious sensibility, from the mere violence of another's anguish, are of so very peculiar a kind, that I have not hesitated to give to this susceptibility of sympathetic feeling a distinct place in our arrangement; for the same reason, as in our systems of physics, we refer to different physical powers, and, therefore, to different parts of our system, the same apparent motions of bodies, when these motions, though in themselves apparently the same which might be produced by other causes, are the results of causes that are in their own nature strikingly different. Pity, however complex the state of mind may be which it expresses, is one of the most interesting of all the states in which the mind can exist, and affords itself an example of the advantage of treating our emotions as complex rather than elementary,—an advantage which led me to form that particular arrangement of our emotions, in the order of which they have been submitted to your consideration,—when, if the mere elements had been all that were submitted to you, you would perhaps have been little able to distinguish in them the familiar complex states of mind, which alone you have been accustomed to distinguish as emotions.

Even that primary feeling of sympathy, which is a mere participation of the sufferings of another, it

may perhaps be thought, is only a form of the affection of *love* before considered by us, since there can be no love without a participation of the sorrows and joys of the object beloved. But these sympathies *are emotions arising from love*, not the *mere regard itself*. We must not forget, that the word *love* is often employed, very vaguely, to signify, not the mere affections of mind which constitute the vivid feelings of regard, but *every affection of mind* that has any reference to the object of this regard. We give the name of love, in this way, to the whole successive states of mind of the lover, as if love were something diffused in them all; but this, though a convenient expression, is still a vague one; and the emotions are not the *less different*, in themselves, for being comprehended in a single word. The *emotion of sympathy* is still different from the simple feeling of *affection*, even when the object of our sympathy is truly the object of our love. It may have *arisen* from it, indeed, but it is not *the same*, as that feeling of warm regard, from which, in such a case, it arose.

So different is the mere sympathy from simple love, that it takes place when there is no actual love whatever, but, on the contrary, *positive dislike or abhorrence*. Let us imagine, not one atrocious crime only, but many crimes the most atrocious, to have been committed by any individual; and let us then suppose him stretched upon the rack, every limb torn, and every fibre quivering. Let us imagine, that we hear the heavy fall of that instrument, by which bone

after bone is slowly broken,—dividing, with dreadful intervals, the groans of the victim, that cease at the moment at which the new stroke is expected, and afterwards rise again *instantly* in more dreadful anguish, to cease only when another more agonizing stroke is again on the point of falling, or when the milder agony of death overwhelms at once the *suffering* and the sufferer. Does our hatred of the criminal save us even from the slightest uneasiness at what we see and hear? Do we feel no cold shuddering at the sound of the worse than deadly blow? no terror, increasing into agony at the moment when it pauses, as we expected it to fall again? It is enough for us that there is agony before our eyes. Without loving the sufferer,—for though the feelings that oppress us, may not allow us to think of his atrocities at the moment, they certainly do not invest him with any amiable qualities, except that of being miserable,—we feel for him what it is impossible for us *not* to feel for any living thing that is in equal anguish. We should feel this,—if the anguish be of a kind that forces itself upon our senses in all its dreadful reality,—though his crimes were whispered to us every moment; and when he lies mangled and groaning before us, if we were forced to inflict another stroke with our own hands, that was to *break* the *last unbroken limb,* or to receive the blow ourselves, it is not easy to say from which alternative we should shrink with a more frightful and sickly loathing.

In all this, Nature has consulted well. If our sympathy had been made to depend on our moral

approbation, it would rise in many cases too late to be of profit. We are men; and nothing which man can feel is foreign to us. The friend of the Self-tormentor in Terence's comedy, when he uttered these memorable words, which have been so often quoted, "Homo sum; *humani* nihil à *me alienum* puto,"*—expressed only what the Author of our being has fixed, in some degree, in every heart, and which is as much a part of the mental constitution of the virtuous, as their powers of memory and reason.

If compassion were to arise only after we had ascertained the *moral character* of the sufferer, and weighed all the consequences of good and evil which might result to society from the relief which it is in our power to offer, who would rush to the preservation of the drowning mariner, to the succour of the wounded, to the aid of him who calls for help against the ruffians who are assailing him? Our powers of giving assistance have been better accommodated to the *necessities* which may be relieved by them. By the principle of compassion within us, we are benefactors almost without willing it;—we have already *done the deed*, when, if deliberation had been necessary as a previous step, we should not have proceeded far in the calculation which was to determine, by a due equipoise of opposite circumstances, the propriety of the relief.

Even in the case of our happier feelings, it is in-

* Actûs I. Scena 1. v. 25.

a slight advantage, that Nature has made the sight of *joy* productive of joy to him who merely beholds it. Men are to mingle in society; and they bring into society affections of mind that are almost infinitely various,—hopes and fears, joy and sadness, projects and passions, far more contrasted than their mere external varieties of *form* and *colour*. If these internal diversities of feeling were to continue as they are, what delight could society afford? The opposition would render the company of each a burthen to the other. The gay would fly from the sullen gloom of the melancholy; the melancholy would shrink from a mirth which they could not partake, and which would throw them back upon their own *sorrows* with a deeper intensity of grief. Such is the confusion which society of itself would present. But the same Power, which formed this beautiful system of the universe out of chaos, reduces to equal regularity and beauty *this* and every other confusion of the moral world. By the mere principle of sympathy, all the discord in the social feelings becomes accordant. The *sad* unconsciously become *gay*; the gay are softened into a joy, that has less perhaps of mirth, but not less of delight; and though there is still a diversity of cheerfulness, *all is cheerfulness*,—as in a concert of many instruments, in which, though we are still able to distinguish each instrument from the others, and though the simple tones of each may be various, there is still one universal harmony that seems to animate the whole, like the presence, and the voice or inspiration of the celestial power of Music herself.

But if the bounty of our Creator be shewn, in the provision which he has made for diffusing to many the joy which is felt by *one*, how much more admirable is the providence of his bounty, in that instant diffusion to others of the grief which is felt only by one, that makes the relief of this suffering not a duty merely, which we coldly perform, but a *want*, which is almost like the necessity of some moral appetite! Every individual has thus the aid of all the powers of every other individual. When some wretch is found lying bleeding on the common street, all who see him run to his assistance, as if their own immediate ease depended on their speed. The aged, the infirm, mix in the mob, with an interest as eager as if they were able to join in the common aid; the very child stops as he passes, and cannot resume his sport, till he has followed, with the crowd, the half insensible object of so many cares to a place where surer relief may be procured. When, in a storm, some human being is seen, in the distant surf, clinging to a plank, that is sometimes driven nearer the shore and sometimes carried further off, sometimes buried in the surge and then rising again, as if itself struggling, like the half-hopeless wretch whom it supports, that looks sadly to the shore as he rises from every wave,—has nature abandoned the sufferer without aid? Is he to find no one who will make at least an effort to save a human being that is on the point of perishing? He is not so abandoned. Nature has provided a deliverance for him in the bosom of every spectator. There are courageous hearts and strong hands, that, in the very peril of

an equal fate, will rush to his succour, and that in laying him in safety on that soil, which he despaired of treading again, will feel only the joy of having delivered a human being, whose name and whose very existence were unknown to them before.

LECTURE LXII.

I. IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS NECESSARILY INVOLVING SOME MORAL EMOTION.—3. SYMPATHY, CONCLUDED.—4. PRIDE AND HUMILITY.

GENTLEMEN, My last Lecture was employed in considering that principle of our nature,—whether original, or the result of other principles,—by which, without any accession of *advantage* to ourselves, or any *misfortune* that can affect our own immediate interest, we enter into the *happiness* or the *sorrows* of others as if they were our own.

The reality of this species of *ever-changing transmigration*, by which, not after *death* merely, but during every successive hour of our waking existence, we pass, as it were, from *one form of being to another*, as the joys or sorrows of different individuals present themselves to our view, I traced and illustrated with various examples.

Of the gladdening influence of sympathy, we found sufficient proof in the cheerfulness which the society of the cheerful naturally diffuses on all who come within *the circle of their gaiety*,—an enchant-

ment as powerful, as that by which the magician was supposed to change, at his will, the passions of all those who entered within the circle to which his influence extended. Even the melancholy, who began at first by *striving*, perhaps painfully, to assume an appearance, not of the mirth, indeed, which was before them, but at least of a serenity which might not be absolutely discordant with it, at last yield unconsciously to the fascination; and, when a sigh sometimes comes upon them, and forces them to pause, are astonished to look back, and to find that they have been happy.

Of the saddening influence of sympathy, the whole phenomena of pity furnish abundant evidence,—when the mere sight of grief, far from leading us to *fly* from a disagreeable object, leads us to form with it for the time the closest union. Our sympathy identifies us with the sufferer with an influence so irresistible, that it would be impossible for us to feel *even rapture itself*, if, amid all possible objects of delight, there were only a single being in agony, that turned his eye on ours, even though it were without a groan, as he sank beneath the lash, or writhed upon the wheel.

The advantages that arise from this constitution of our nature, we found to be not unimportant in the diffusion and participation even of our gayer feelings; since those who mingle in society are thus brought *nearer* to one general temper, and enjoy, consequently, an intercourse, which could afford little delight if each retained his own particular emo-

tions, that might be in absolute opposition to the emotions of those around. But it was chiefly in the other class of feelings that we found its inestimable benefits, in that instant participation of grief, and consequent eagerness to relieve it, which procures for the sufferer assistance in situations in which he is incapable even of *imploring aid*; which makes *friendlessness itself* a claim to more *general friendship*; and which, in any accident that befals the obscurest individual, interests in his fate whole multitudes, to whom, before the accident, he was unknown, or an object of indifference. If, at midnight, in a crowded city, a house were observed to be in flames, and at some high window, beyond the reach of any succour which could be given, were seen, by glimpses, through the darkness and the gloomy light that flashed across it, some unfortunate being, irresolute whether to leap down the dreadful height,—seeming at one moment on the point of making the attempt, and then, after repeated trials, shrinking back at last into the flames that burst over him;—with what lively emotions of interest would he be viewed by the whole crowd, in which there would not be an eye that would not be fixed upon him! What agitation of hopes and fears, and what shrieks of many voices at the last dreadful moment! It would truly seem, in such a case, as if, in the peril of a single human being, the whole multitude that gazed on him were threatened with destruction, from which his escape, if escape were possible, was to be the pledge, and the only pledge, of safety to all.

The emotions, next to be considered by us, are those of *pride* and *humility*—the vivid feelings of joy or sadness, which attend the contemplation of ourselves, when we regard our *superiority* or *inferiority*, in any qualities of mind or body, or in the external circumstances in which we may be placed.

Pride and humility, therefore, always imply some *comparison*. We can as little be proud, without the consideration of an *inferior*, as we can be *taller* in *stature*, without some one who is shorter;—unless when, by a sort of indirect comparison, we measure ourselves with ourselves, in the present and the past, and feel a delightful emotion, as we look back on the progress which we have made.

When I define *pride*, to be that emotion, which attends the contemplation of our excellence, I must be understood, as limiting the phrase to the *single emotion*, that immediately follows the contemplation. The *feeling of our excellence*, may give rise, directly or indirectly, to various other affections of the mind. It may *lead* us, to impress others, as much as possible, with our superiority—which we may do in *two* ways, by presenting to them, at every moment, some proofs of *our* advantages, mental, bodily, or in the gifts of fortune; or by bringing to their mind, directly, *their* inferiority, by the scorn with which we treat them. The former of these modes of conduct, in which we studiously bring forward any real or supposed advantages which we possess, is what is commonly termed *vanity*,—the *latter*, in which we wish to make more directly felt, the real

or supposed comparative meanness of these, is what is commonly termed *haughtiness*; but both, though they may *arise* from our mere comparison of ourselves and others, and our consequent feeling of superiority, are the *results* of pride, not the *pride itself*. We may have the internal emotion, which is all that is truly pride, together with too much sense to seek the gratification of our vanity, by any childish display of excellencies, substantial or frivolous; since, however desirous we may be, that these advantages should be *known*, we may have the certainty, that they could not be *made known* by *ourselves*, without the risk of our appearing ridiculous. In like manner, we may be, internally, very full of our own importance, and yet too desirous of the good opinion, even of our inferiors, to treat them with the scorn which we feel, or, to make a more pleasing supposition, too *humanely considerate of their uneasiness*, to shock them, by forcing on them the painful feeling of their inferiority, however gratifying our *felt superiority* may be to ourselves. *Vanity*, then, and *haughtiness*, are not to be confounded, with the simple *pride*, which *leads* to them, in some minds, but which may exist, and exist as *readily*, *without* them, as *with* them.

The mere pleasure of excellence attained,—thus separated from the vanity or haughtiness, that would lead to any ridiculous or cruel display of it,—involves nothing which is actually worthy of censure,—*if* the superiority be not in circumstances that are *frivolous*,—still less in circumstances that,

although sanctioned by the fashion of the times, imply *demerit* rather than *merit*. In the circumstances, in which it is truly praiseworthy to *desire* to *excel*, it must be truly noble to *have excelled*. It is impossible to be *desirous of excelling*, without a *pleasure, in having excelled;* and, where it would be *culpable*, to feel pleasure in the attainments that have made us nobler than we were before, it must, of course, have been culpable, to *desire such excellence*.

It is not in pride, therefore, or the pleasure of excellence, as a mere direct emotion, that moral error consists, but in those *ill-ordered affections*, which may have led us to the pursuit of excellence, that is unworthy of our desire, and [illegible] cannot, therefore, shed any glory on our attainment of it. If our desires are fixed only on excellence in what is *good*, it is impossible for us to feel *too lively a pleasure*, in the gratification of these desires. We may, indeed, become ridiculous, by our vanity in displaying our attainments,—and, which is far worse, we may exercise a sort of cruelty, in reminding others by our scorn, how *inferior* we consider *them* to ourselves; but what is morally improper, in these cases, is in the *vanity* and the *haughtiness*, not in the vivid delight, which we feel, in the acquisition of excellence, the attainment of which is the great end, and the glorious labour, of virtue—an excellence, that renders us more useful to mankind, and a nobler image of the Power which created us.

What renders the feeling of *delight in excellence*

attained, not *excusable* merely, but *praise-worthy*, is, then, a *right estimate of those objects*, in which we are desirous of excelling. I need not say, that, to be proud of being pre-eminent in *vice*, implies the deepest degradation of our *moral*, and even of our *intellectual* nature,—a degradation, far more complete and hopeless, than the commission of the same guilt, with the consciousness of imperfection. But on this species of pride, I surely need not dwell. To be proud, however, of eminence in what is frivolous only,—but absolutely profligate,—itself implies no slight degree of moral degradation; because it implies a blindness to those better qualities, that confer the only distinctions, which Virtue can covet, and God approves.

These distinctions are the distinctions of the understanding and of the heart,—*of the heart*, in the noble desires of which it may be conscious,—*of the understanding*, in that knowledge, by the acquisition of which, we are able to open a wider field to our generous desires, and to promote more effectually their honourable purposes. In this preparatory scene, we are placed to enjoy as much happiness, as is consistent with the preparation for a nobler world, —to diffuse to others all the happiness, which it is in our power to communicate to them,—and to offer to him, who made us, that best adoration, which consists in love of his goodness, and an unremitting zeal, to execute the honourable charge which he has consigned to us, of furthering those *great views of good*, which men, indeed, may thus instrumentally

promote, but which only the divine mind could have originally conceived. In this glorious *delegation*, all earthly, and, I may say, all eternal excellence consists. With whatever illusion human pride may delight to flatter itself, *he* is truly the noblest, in the sight of wisdom, and of Heaven, however small his share may be of that adventitious grandeur, which, in those who are morally *great*, is nothing, and less than nothing, in those who are morally vile, —*he* is the noblest, who applies his faculties, *most sedulously*, to the most *generous purposes*, with the warmest impression of that divine goodness, which has formed the heart to be susceptible of wishes so divine. If we be proud of anything, which does not confer dignity on the intellectual, or moral, or religious nature of man, we may be certain, that we are proud of that, which, if considered without relation to objects that may be indirectly promoted by it, is, in itself, more worthy of our contempt, than of our pride. The peace and good order, and consequently the happiness of society, require, indeed, that forms of respect should be paid to mere station, and to the accidental possession of wealth, and hereditary honours; but they do not require, that the *possessor* of these should conceive himself truly raised above others, in that only real dignity, which is more than a trapping, or form of courteous salutation, in the gaudy pageantries of the day. "If the great," says Massillon, "have no other glory, than that of their ancestors; if their titles are their only virtues; if we must recall *past ages*, to find in them

something that is worthy of our homage, their *birth* dishonours them, even in the estimation of the world. Their name is opposed by us to their *person*,—we read the histories that record the great deeds of their ancestors, and we demand of their unworthy successors the virtues, which formerly conferred so much glory on their country. The weight of honour, which they inherit, is to them but a burthen, that sinks them still lower to the ground. Yet, how visible on every brow is the pride of their origin. They count the degrees of their grandeur by ages, which are no more,—by dignities, which they no longer possess,—by actions, which *they* have not performed,—by ancestors, of whom a little indistinguishable dust is all that remains,—by monuments, which the passing injuries of season after season have effaced; and they think themselves superior to the rest of mankind, because they have more domestic ruins to mark the desolation of time, and can thus produce more proofs than other men of the vanity of all earthly things. High birth, it will be readily allowed, is an illustrious prerogative, to which the consent of nations, in every period of the world, has attached peculiar distinctions of honour. Yet it is a title only, not a virtue,—an engagement to glory, and a domestic lesson of the means by which it may be obtained,—not that which either constitutes glory or confers it. The succession of honour, which it seems to convey to us, perishes, and becomes extinct in us, if we inherit only the *name*, without inheriting also the virtues that rendered it illustrious. We sink, then, into the general mass of mankind, and begin, as it

were, a new race. Our nobility belongs to our name only, and our person, in every thing which is truly our own, has as little ancestry, as the meanest of the crowd.

"Tota licet veteres exornent undique ceræ
Atria, nobilitas sola est atque unica *Virtus*.
Paulus, vel Cossus, vel Drusus, *moribus* esto;
Hos ante effigies majorum pone tuorum!
Precedant ipsas illi te consule virgas.
Prima mihi debes animi bona;—Sanctus haberi
Justitiæque tenax, factis, dictisque mireris!
Agnosco procerem."*

These remarks, in application to the pride of rank, are equally applicable to every species of pride, that is not founded on intrinsic excellence of the mental character. If it be absurd, for man, to feel, as if he truly shared the glory of actions, which were not *his own*,—of actions, with which his own conduct, perhaps, in almost every instance, might be contrasted, with far more complete opposition, than the conduct of his illustrious ancestors themselves, might have been contrasted with that of the mean and ignoble of their own time, when this mere contrast with vices like those of their offspring, was that which conferred on *themselves* distinction,—

"Si, *coram Lepidis male* vivitur?—Effigies quo
Tot bellatorum, si luditur alea pernox
Ante Numantinos,—si dormire incipes ortu
Luciferi, quo signo duces et castra movebant;"—†

* Juvenal, Sat. VII.—v. 19—26

† Ibid, v. 9—12.

if even this self-illusion, which usurps or claims the praise of virtue in the midst of vice, be, as it most truly is, an illusion, it must at the same time be remembered, that it is one, with which the general sentiment more readily accords, than with any other illusion of which the mind of man is susceptible,—that though, in many unfortunate cases, it may be as degrading to the individual who proudly receives the homage, as to the individuals who servilely offer it,—in other cases, its influence, even on the individual himself, is animating, and truly ennobling, by the domestic lessons and incitements which it presents; and that even in its political influence, the veneration thus attached to hereditary distinctions has, upon the whole, by the social tranquillity which it has produced, and the counteracting powers which it has opposed to the aggressions of individual despotism, been productive of more advantage to society, than many of the sublimest abstractions of political wisdom,—advantages, of which those who *gave*, and those who *received* the homage, were, indeed, alike unconscious, and would probably have been regardless, even if they had known them, but which did not the less enter into the contemplation of *Him*, who formed mankind, to feel this almost universal sentiment, for nobler purposes than the mere gratification of the arrogance of a few, and the meanness of the many. If, then, a pride, which has still at least some relation to virtue, or to what was counted virtue, however distant, involve absurdity, —what are we to think of those species of pride,

which have no relation to virtue of any kind, which are founded on every frivolity, or, perhaps, on every vice, as if it were the highest title to the applause of mankind, *to be of the least possible service to their interests?* What shall we think of the mind of that man, who, endowed with a capacity of serving God by benefitting the world, in which he is placed to represent him, can derive dignity from the thought of having placed a button where a button never had been placed before,—whose face glows with a noble pride, as he walks the streets with this new dignity,—and who derives from the consciousness of this button,—I will not say as much happiness, for I will not prostitute the noble word,—but, at least, as much self-complacency as is felt, in the hour of his glorious mortality, by the expiring combatant for freedom, or the martyr.

So pleased are we with *distinction*, that there is nothing, however contemptible, from which it is not in our power to derive some additional vanity, *when we consider it as our own*;—a book, a withered flower, a dead insect, a bit of hard earth, confer on us a distinction which we think that every one must envy. If the book be the only known copy of the most worthless edition,—the flower, the insect, the stone, the only specimens of their kind in the country which has the honour of possessing them, we are of as *rare* merit, in our own eyes, as the worthless things themselves. Man occupies, indeed, but little room in nature, but he has the secret of spreading himself out, over everything belonging to him;—

our house, *our* gardens, *our* horses, *our* dogs, are parts of our own being. To praise *them* is to praise *us;* and, if we be *very modest,* and the praise very profuse, we almost blush at the panegyric, of which we are afraid of appearing vain.

> "The squire is proud to see his courser strain,
> And well-breath'd beagles sweep along the plain.
> Say, dear Hippolitus, (whose drink is ale,
> Whose erudition is a Christmas tale,
> Whose mistress is saluted with a smack,
> And friend received with thumps upon the back,)
> When thy sleek gelding nimbly leaps the mound,
> And Ringwood opens on the tainted ground,
> Is that thy praise? Let Ringwood's praise* alone;
> Just Ringwood leaves each animal his own,
> Nor envies when a gypsy you commit,
> And shake the clumsy bench with country wit,—
> When you the dullest of dull things have said,
> And then ask pardon for the jest you made."†

In all these cases, it is easy to see by how ready an identification of ourselves with every thing that belongs to us, we assume a praise, that belongs as little to *us,* as to any other human being. We are, with respect to our possessions, like that Soul of the world, of which ancient poets and ancient philosophers speak, that was supposed to be diffused in it everywhere, and to animate the whole. We exist, in like manner, in everything which is ours, with a sort of omnipresent vanity; and by the transfer to others of the mere trappings of our external state, we should not merely sink in general estimation, but

* Fame—*Orig.*

† Young's Love of Fame, Sat. I.

we should truly feel, ourselves, in our mortified pride, as if we had lost half, or more than half, of our little virtues and perfections.

To common minds, that are unsusceptible of higher pleasure, this pride of external things is at least a source of consolation; and restores, in some measure, that equilibrium, which might seem too violently broken by the existing differences of intellectual capacity. Those who are absolutely incapable of feeling the beauties of a work of genius, are perfectly capable of deriving all the pleasure which can be derived from the possession of a volume printed by an illustrious printer, and bound by the first binder of the age. Those who cannot feel the beauty of the universe, as the manifestation of that transcendent excellence which created it, may be capable of feeling all the excellence of a tulip or carnation, that differs from other tulips or carnations, by some slight stain, which attracts no eye but that of a florist, but which instantly attracts a florist's eye, and fills him with rapture, if he be the fortunate possessor, and with envy and despair, if it be the property of another,—of a rival, perhaps, whom he had before the glory of vanquishing in a contest of hyacinths, but who is now to enjoy the revenge of a triumph so much more glorious.

To ordinary minds, these little rivalries and victories, and all the pride which is *elevated* by them, or *depressed*, may be considered as forming only a sort of feeble compensation for those greater objects of excellence, which their microscopic eyes, that see the little as if it were great, but which cannot see

the great itself, are incapable of appreciating, because, in truth, they are incapable of perceiving them. How much more do they strike us, however, when they exist in minds that are unquestionably capable of higher attainments, and that after enlightening the world, or regulating its political destinies, can stoop to be the friend of a boxer, or the rival, and, perhaps, in this rivalry, the inferior of their own coachman or groom.

> "Who would not praise Patricio's high desert,
> His hand unstain'd, his uncorrupted heart,
> His comprehensive head,—All interests weigh'd,
> All Europe sav'd, yet Britain not betray'd?—
> He thanks you not—His pride is in Picquette,
> Newmarket fame, and judgment in a bet." *

That such misplaced pride, in which the merit of real excellence is scarcely felt, in the vanity of some trifling accomplishment, or of feats which scarcely deserve the name even of accomplishments, however trifling, exists, not in the satirical pictures of poetry only, but in real life, you must know too well from the biography of many distinguished characters, to require any proofs or exemplifications of it; and though at first, perhaps, the pride may seem a very singular anomaly, in minds in which the general power of discrimination is manifestly of a high order, it is not very difficult, I think, to detect at least the chief circumstance which tends to produce and favour it.

* Pope's Moral Essays, Ep. I. v. 81—86.

The *pleasure* of *success*, in any case, you must be aware, is not to be estimated only by the *real value of that which is attained*, but by this value combined with the *doubtfulness* of the attainment, when it was regarded by us merely as an object of our desire. To gain what we considered ourselves *sure* of gaining, is scarcely a source of any very high satisfaction;—to gain what we *wished* to gain, but what we had little thought of gaining, is a source of lively delight. He who has long led a cabinet of statesmen, by his transcendant political wisdom, and who is sure of leading them, so as to obtain a ready sanction of every measure that may be proposed by him for the government of a nation, and thus, indirectly perhaps, for the regulation of the fortune of the world, is not, on account of his mere political wisdom, to be held as a better jockey, or speedier calculator of odds at a gaming table.—With his profound knowledge of the sources of finance, and of the relations of *kingdoms*, he is not as sure, therefore, of Newmarket fame and judgment in a bet, as he is of saving Europe, without betraying the interest of his own land;—and though he may be far more skilful in making armies march, and navies appear where navies most are wanted, he may not be able to bring down more birds of a covey, or have a much greater chance of being in at the death of a fox, than the stupidest of those human animals, who spend their days in galloping after one. There is a more anxious suspense, therefore, in these insignificant, or worse than insignificant attempts, than in the important councils which his judgment and eloquence have been accus-

tomed to sway; and consequently a livelier pleasure when the suspense has terminated favourably. The superiority which he was to shew in greater matters excited no astonishment, because it was anticipated by all; but to be first when he was not expected to be first, is a delightful victory over opinion; and it is not very wonderful, therefore, that he should be induced to *repeat* what was peculiarly delightful, and be flattered by each renewal of success. It is only the contrast of his high powers of mind, which renders his exultation, in the petty triumph, so astonishing to us; and yet it is, perhaps, only because his judgment and eloquence are so transcendent, as to leave no suspense whatever with respect to that political dominion which he is sure to exercise, that he is thus gratified, in so high a degree, by the petty triumphs, which are less certain, and therefore leave him the excitement of anxiety, and the pleasure of success. Had his intellectual powers been of a less high order, and less sure of their great objects, he would probably have been regardless of the little objects, which are relatively *great* to him, only because from their absolute littleness, they admit of wider competition.

In defining pride, as a mere emotion, to be *that feeling of vivid pleasure which attends the consciousness of our excellence*, I have already remarked, that the emotion, far from being blameable, where the excellence is in things that are noble, is a proof only of that *desire of excelling in noble things*, which is a great part of virtue; and, without which, it is scarcely possible to conceive even the existence of

virtue, since *he* surely cannot be *virtuous* who would willingly leave unattempted the attainment of a *single* possible moral excellence, in addition to those already attained; or who would not feel *mortified*, if he had suffered an opportunity of generous exertion to pass away in idleness. The habit of virtue is, indeed, nothing more than the regular conformity of our actions to this desire of generous excellence; and to desire the excellence, without feeling delight in each step of the glorious progress to the attainment of it, is as little possible, as to feel the craving of hunger, and yet to feel no gratification in the relief of the appetite. It is only when the objects, in which we have wished to excel, have been unworthy of the desire of beings formed for those great hopes which ultimately await us, that the pleasure of the excellence, as we have seen in the species of ridiculous pride, to which I have alluded in the different illustrations offered to you, is itself unworthy of us.

When I say, however, that in pride, as an emotion attending the consciousness of excellence in noble pursuits, there is no moral impropriety, since it is only the name for that pleasure which the virtuous *must* feel, or cease to be *virtuous*, it may be necessary to caution you against a misconception, into which you might very readily fall. The pride of which I speak is a name for the emotion itself, and is limited to the particular emotion that rises at any moment on the contemplation of some virtuous excellence attained; *with which limitation*, it is as praiseworthy as the humility, which is only the feeling arising from a sense of inferiority or failure in

the same great pursuit. But it is only, as limited to the particular emotion, that the praise which I allow to pride is justly referable to it. In the common vague use of the term, in which it is applied with a comprehensive variety of meaning, not so much to the particular emotion, as to a prevalent disposition of the mind to discover superiority in itself where it truly does not exist, and to dwell on the contemplation of the superiority where it does exist, with an insulting disdain, perhaps, of those who are inferior;—pride is unquestionably a vice as degrading to the mind of the individual, as it is offensive to that Great Being, who has formed the superior and the inferior, for mutual offices of benevolence, and who often compensates, by excellencies that are unknown to the world, the more glaring disparity in qualities which the world is quicker in discerning.

The pride, then, or temporary feeling of pleasure, when we are conscious, at any moment, that we have acted as became us, is to be distinguished from pride, as *significant of general character*, of a character which is truly *as* unamiable, as the pleasure which is felt even by the most humble in some *act* of virtuous excellence, and which is felt, perhaps, by them still more delightfully than by others, is deserving of our approbation and our love. Strange and paradoxical, indeed, as it may seem, there can be little doubt, when we consider it, that *pride*, in this general sense, implies all that might be regarded as *degrading* in humility; and that humility of character, on the contrary, implies what is most ennobling,

or rather what is usually considered as most ennobling, in the opposite character.

Pride and humility, as I have already remarked, are always relative terms; they imply a comparison of some sort, with an object higher or lower; and the same mind, with actual excellence exactly the same, and with the same comparative attainments in every one around, may thus be either *proud* or *humble*, as it looks *above* or looks *beneath*. In the great scale of society, there is a continued rise from *one* excellence to *another* excellence, internal or external, intellectual or moral. Wherever we may fix, there is still some one whom we may find *superior* or *inferior*, and these relations are mutually convertible as we ascend or descend. The shrub is taller than the flower that grows in its shade; the tree than the shrub; the rock than the tree; the mountain than the single rock; and above all are the *sun* and the heavens. It is the same in the world of life. From that Almighty Being, who is the source of all life, to the lowest of his creatures, what innumerable gradations may be traced, even in the ranks of excellence on our own earth,—each being *higher* than that beneath, and *lower* than that above; and thus all to all, objects at once of pride or humility, according as the comparison may be made with the *greater* or with the *less*.

Of two minds, then, possessing equal excellence, *which* is the more noble? that which, however high the excellence attained by it, has still some nobler excellence in view, to which it feels its own inferiority,—or that, which having risen a few steps in the

ascent of intellectual and moral glory, thinks only of those beneath, and rejoices in an excellence which would appear to it of little value, if only it lifted a single glance to the perfection above? Yet this habitual tendency to look *beneath*, rather than *above*, is the character of mind which is denominated pride; while the tendency to look *above* rather than *below*, and to feel an inferiority, therefore, which others, perhaps, do not perceive, is the character which is denominated humility. Is it false, then, or even extravagant to say, that humility is truly the *nobler;* and that pride, which delights in the contemplation of the abject things beneath, is truly in itself more abject than that meekness of heart, which is humble because it has *greater objects*, and which looks with reverence to the excellence that is above it, because it is formed with a capacity of feeling all the worth of that excellence which it reveres?

It has, accordingly, been the universal remark of all who make any remarks whatever, that it is not in great and permanent excellence that we expect to find the arrogant airs of superiority, but in the more petty or sudden distinctions of the little great. It is not the man of science who is proud, but he who knows inaccurately a few unconnected facts, which he dignifies with the name of *science*, and of which he forms, perhaps, what he is pleased to dignify, by a similar misnomer, with the name of a *theory*, to the astonishment and admiration of others, a *very* little more ignorant than himself. She, whose personal charms are acknowledged by a whole metropolis, and the wit who delights the wise and the learn-

ed, may have no slight pride, indeed, but they are very likely to be surpassed in pride by the Wit and the Beauty of a country town, as much as they may truly surpass them in all the attractions on which the pride is founded.

"I have read," says Montesquieu, "in the relation of the voyage of one of our vessels of discovery, that some of the crew having landed on the coast of Guinea to purchase some sheep, were led to the presence of the sovereign, who was administering justice to his people under a tree. He was on his throne, that is to say on a block of wood, on which he sat with all the dignity of the Mogul. He had three or four guards with wooden pikes, and a large umbrella served him for a canopy. His whole royal ornaments, and those of her majesty the queen, consisted in their black skin and a few rings. This prince, still more vain than miserable, asked the strangers, if they spoke much about him in France. He thought that his name could not fail to be carried from one pole to the other; and, unlike that conqueror of whom it was said, that he put all the earth to silence, he believed, for his part, that he set all the universe a talking.

"When the Khan of Tartary has dined, a herald cries out, that now all the sovereigns of the earth may go to dinner as soon as they please; and this barbarian, whose banquet is only a little milk, who has no house, and who exists but by plunder, looks upon all the kings of the world as his slaves, and insults them regularly twice a day."

Such is the ignorance from which pride usually flows. The child, the savage, the illiterate,—who, in every stage of society, are intellectually savages, —have feelings of self-complacent exultation, which, ludicrous as they may seem to those who consider from a more elevated height the little attainments that may have given birth to those proud emotions, are the natural result of the very ignorance to which such proud emotions seem so very little suited. To him who has just quitted a jail, every step is an advance that is easily measured; but the more advanced the progress, the less relatively does every step appear. The child, at almost every new lesson which he receives, may be considered as nearly doubling his little stock of knowledge; and he is not the last himself to feel, that his knowledge is thus doubled, or, at least, that those who are but a little behind him have scarcely half as much wondrous wisdom as is heaped in his own little brain. What is true of the child in years is true of the child in science, whatever his years may be; and to increase knowledge, far from increasing the general pride of the individual, is often the surest mode of diminishing it. It is the same with all the arts and sciences, considered as one great stock of excellence. He whose whole attention has been devoted to any one of these will run some risk of a haughty exultation, which is not felt by those, who with equal, or perhaps greater excellence in that one, are acquainted also with what is excellent in other sciences, or other arts. The accomplished philosopher and man of

letters, to whom the great names of all who have been eminent in ancient and modern times, in all the nations in which the race of man has risen to glory, are familiar, almost like the names of those with whom he is living in society,—who has thus constantly before his mind images of excellence of the highest order, and who, even in the hopes which he dares to form, feels how small a contribution it will be in his power to add to the great imperishable stock of human wisdom,—may be proud indeed; but his pride will be of a sort that is tempered with humility, and will be humility itself, if compared with the pride of a pedant or sciolist, who thinks, that in adding the result of some little discovery which he may have fortunately made, he is almost doubling that mass of knowledge, in which it is scarcely perceived as an element.

Pride, then, as a character of self-complacent exultation, is not the prevailing cast of mind of those who are formed for genuine excellence. He who is formed for genuine excellence, has before him an ideal perfection,—that semper melius aliquid,—which makes excellence itself, however admirable, to those who measure it only with their weaker powers,—seem, to his own mind, as compared with what he has ever in his own mental vision, a sort of *failure*. He thinks less of what he has done, than of what it seems possible to do,—and he is not so much proud of merit attained, as desirous of a merit that has not yet been attained by him.

It is in this way, that the very religion, which

ennobles man, leads him not to pride, but to humility. It elevates him from the smoke and dust of earth; but it elevates him above the darkness, that he may see better the great heights which are above him. It shews him not the mere excellence of a few frail creatures, as fallible as himself, but excellence, the very conception of which is the highest effort, that can be made by man; exhibiting thus constantly, what it will be the only honour worthy of his nature to imitate, however faintly,—and checking his momentary pride, at every step of his glorious progress, by the brightness and the vastness of what is still before him.

May I not add to these remarks, that it is in this way, we are to account for that *humility*, which is so peculiarly a part of the Christian character, as contrasted with the general pride which other systems either recommend or allow. The Christian religion is, indeed, as has been often sarcastically said by those who revile it, the religion of the *humble in heart*; but it is the religion of the humble, only because it presents to our contemplation, a higher excellence than was ever before exhibited to man. The proud look down upon the earth, and see nothing that creeps upon its surface more noble than themselves. The humble look upward to their God.

LECTURE LXIII.

II. RETROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS. — SUBDIVISION OF THEM, AS THEY RELATE TO OTHERS, OR TO OURSELVES.—1. ANGER.—GRATITUDE.

GENTLEMEN, my remarks on the emotions of Pride and Humility,—those *vivid feelings* which attend the belief of our *excellence* or *superiority*, in any circumstances, *internal* or *external*,—brought to a conclusion, in my last Lecture, the observations, which I had to offer, on one set of our emotions,—those which I have termed *immediate*, that arise from the consideration of objects *as present*, or not involving, at least, any necessary reference to *time*.

The emotions, which, according to the general principles of our arrangement, we are next to consider, are those which relate to objects as *past*;—the conception of some object of former pleasure or pain, being essential to the complex feeling. To this set of emotions, accordingly, I have given the name of *retrospective*.

These may be *subdivided*, as they relate to *others*, and to *ourselves*.

Our *retrospective emotions*, which relate to *others*, are *anger* for evil inflicted, and *gratitude* for good conferred,—to which emotions, as complex feelings, in all their variety, the conception of *evil*, as past, or of *good*, as past, is, you will perceive, essential.

Those, which relate to *ourselves*, are either *simple regret* or *satisfaction*, that arises from the consideration of any circumstances or events, which may have been productive of joy or sorrow, or may promise or threaten to be productive of them,—or that *moral regret* or *satisfaction*, which have reference to our own past conduct or desires;—of the former of which, the *regret* that is felt by us, when we look back on our moral delinquencies, *remorse* is the common appropriate name; while the latter, the satisfaction with which we review our past actions or wishes, has no strict appropriate name, corresponding with the opposite term *remorse*; but is sometimes called *self-approbation*,—sometimes included in that familiar phrase of general and happy comprehension, *a good conscience*. Whatever name we may give to it, however, it is easily understood, as that emotion, which bears to our remembrance of our *virtuous actions* the relation, which remorse bears to the remembrance of our actions of an opposite character.

I proceed, then, to the consideration of our *retrospective emotions*, in the order, in which I have now mentioned them.

The first of these is *Anger*. Anger is that emo-

tion of instant displeasure, which arises from the feeling of injury done, or the discovery of injury intended,—or, in many cases, from the discovery of the mere omission of good offices, to which we conceived ourselves entitled,—though this very omission may itself be regarded as a species of injury. It is usually, or I may say *universally*,—certainly, at least, *almost universally*, followed by another emotion, which constitutes the desire of inflicting evil of some sort in return; but this, though resulting from the feeling of instant displeasure,—so immediately resulting from it, as to *admit*, in ethics and in common discourse, of being combined with it in one simple term—is not to be *confounded* with it, as the same, in any analysis, at least in any minute philosophic analysis, which we may make of our emotion. The *evil felt*,—the *dislike*,—the *desire of retaliation*,—however rapidly they may succeed, and however closely and permanently they may continue afterwards to coexist, in one complex state of mind, are still originally distinct. The primary emotion of *anger*, involves the instant displeasure merely, with the notion of evil *done* or *intended*, and is strictly retrospective: the resentment, or revenge, which is only a longer continued resentment, if we were to consider it without any regard to this primary displeasure which gives birth to it, would be referred by us to that other set of our emotions, which I have termed prospective. It is a desire, as much as any other of our desires. But though, in our minute philosophic analysis, this distinction of

the two successive states of mind is necessary, it is not necessary, in considering the feeling of resentment in its moral relations; and, in the few remarks which I have to offer on it, I shall, therefore, consider the instant displeasure itself, and the *desire of returning evil*, as one emotion. To estimate fully the importance of this principle of our constitution, we must consider man, not merely as he exists, in the midst of all the securities of artificial police, but as he has existed in the various stages which have marked his progress in civilization.

The existence of the race of men in society, wherever men are to be found, does not prove, more powerfully, the intention of our Creator, that we should form with each other a social communion, than the mere consideration of the faculties and affections of our mind,—of all which constitutes the strength of our manhood, when each individual has treasured, in his own mind, the acquisitions of many generations preceding,—and of all which constituted the weakness of our infancy, when, but for the shelter of the society in which we were born, we could not have existed for a single day.

But, though man is formed for society—*born* in it, *living* in it, *dying* in it,—the excellence of society itself is progressive. Even in its best state of legal refinement, when offences and the punishment of offences, correspond with the nicest proportion which human discernment can be supposed to measure or devise, it is scarcely possible that the united strength of the community should be so exactly adapted to every *possibility* of injury, as to leave no

crime without its corresponding punishment; and, as the social system exists at present, and still more as it has existed for ages, the injuries, for which legal redress is, or can be received, bear but a very small proportion in number to the injuries, which might be done, or even which are done, without any means of such adequate reparation. Nature, however, has not formed man for *one* stage of society only; she has formed him for all its stages,—from the rude and gloomy fellowships of the cave and the forest, to all the tranquillity and refinement of the most splendid city. It was necessary, therefore, that he should be provided with faculties and passions, suitable to the necessities of *every* stage,—that in periods, when there was no protection from without, that could save him from aggressions, there might be at least some protection *within*,—some principle, which might give him additional vigour, when assailed, and which, from the certainty of this additional vigour of resistance, might render attack formidable to the assailant; and thus save at once, from guilt, and from the consequences of guilt, the individual who otherwise might have dared to be unjust, and the individual who would have suffered from the unjust invasion.

What human wants required, that all-foreseeing Power, who is the guardian of our infirmities, has supplied to human weakness. There is a principle in our mind, which is to us like a constant protector,—which may slumber, indeed, but which slumbers only at seasons when its vigilance would be useless, which awakes, therefore, at the first appearance

of unjust intention, and which becomes *more* watchful and *more* vigorous, in proportion to the violence of the attack which it has to dread. What should we think of the providence of nature, if, when aggression was threatened against the weak and unarmed, at a distance from the aid of others, there were, instantly and uniformly, by the intervention of some wonder-working power, to rush into the hand of the defenceless, a sword or other weapon of defence? And yet this would be but a feeble assistance, if compared with that which we receive from those simple emotions which heaven has caused to *rush*, as it were, into our mind for repelling every attack. What would be a sword in the trembling hand of the infirm, of the aged,—of him whose pusilanimous spirit shrinks at the very appearance, not of danger merely, but even of the arms, by the use of which danger might be averted, and to whom, consequently, the very sword, which he scarcely knew how to grasp, would be an additional cause of terror, not an instrument of defence and safety? The *instant anger*, which arises, does more than many such weapons. It gives the spirit, which knows how to make a weapon of every thing, or which, of itself, does, without a weapon, what even a thunder-bolt would be powerless to do, in the shuddering grasp of the coward. When *anger* arises, *fear is gone*;—there is no coward, for all are brave. Even bodily infirmity seems to yield to it, like the very infirmities of the mind. The *old* are, for the moment, *young* again; the *weakest vigorous*.

This effect the emotion of anger produces, at the very time of aggression; and, though no other ef-

fect were to arise from it, even this would be most salutary; but this transient effect is trifling, compared with its permanent effects. If this momentary feeling were all, the contest would be a contest of mere degrees of force; and the weaker, whatever accession of power and courage he might receive from the emotion which animated him, if the additional strength which the anger gave to his arm and to his heart did not raise him to an equality with his unjust assailant, though he might not sink till after a longer struggle, would still sink wholly and hopelessly. It is the long-remaining resentment that outlasts, not the momentary *violence* of emotion only, but all the evil consequences of the injustice itself, which renders the anger even of the *weakest* formidable, because it enables them to avail themselves, even at the most distant period, of aid, before which all the strength of the strongest individual must shrink into nothing. There is a community, to the whole force of which the injured may appeal; and there is an emotion in his breast which will never leave him till that appeal be made. Time and space, which otherwise might have afforded impunity to the aggressor, are thus no shelter for his delinquency; because resentment is of every place and of every time; and the just resentment of a single individual may become the wrath and the vengeance of a nation. He who is attacked on some lonely plain, where no human eye is present with him, but that dreadful eye which looks only to threaten death, no arm but that dreadful arm which is lifting the dagger, has eyes and arms, which at the distance, perhaps, of

many years, are to be present, as it were, at the very deed of that hour, for his relief, or at least, for his avengement. A crime, perpetrated on the farthest spot of the globe, that is subject to our sway, may have its retribution *here*, a retribution as dreadful as if all the multitude who assemble to witness it had been present at the very moment, on the very spot, where the crime was committed,—or had come, at a single call, for help, (with the omnipotence of a thousand arms, to the succour of the injured. It is necessary, therefore, for deterring unjust provocation that man should not *feel* anger merely, but should be capable of *retaining the resentment* till he can borrow that *general* aid of the community, to which, in the instant of any well planned villainy, it would, probably, be in vain to look. The wrath of a single individual, and of the weakest and most defenceless individual, may thus carry with it as much terror as the wrath of the strongest, or even of a whole army of the strong.

Such is *anger*, as felt by the individual aggrieved. But when a crime is very *atrocious*, the anger is not confined to the individual directly aggrieved. There rises in the mind of others an emotion, not so *vivid*, perhaps, but of the same kind, involving the same instant dislike of the injurer, and followed by the same eager desire of punishment for the atrocious offence. In this case, indeed, we seldom think of applying to the emotion the term *anger*, which is reserved for the emotion of the injured individual. We term it rather *indignation*; but though the name be different, and though the accompanying notions of personal or

foreign injury be also different, the *emotion itself* may be considered as similar. It certainly is not the mere feeling of moral disapprobation, but, combined with this moral disapprobation, a *vivid* dislike, which all who have felt it may remember to have resembled the vivid dislike felt by them in cases in which they have themselves been injured, and a desire of vengeance on the offender as instant, and often as ardent, as when the injury was personal to themselves. The difference, as I before said, is in the accompanying conceptions, not in the mere emotion itself. In periods of revolutionary tumult, when the passions of a mob, and even, in many instances, their most virtuous passions, are the dreadful instruments of which the crafty avail themselves, how powerfully is this influence of indignation exemplified in the impetuosity of their vengeance! *Indignation* is then truly *anger*. The demagogue has only to circulate some tale of oppression; and each rushes almost instantly to the punishment of a crime, in which, though the injury had actually been committed, he had no personal interest, but which is felt by each as a crime against himself. If it was in our power to trace back our emotions through the whole long period of our life, to our boyhood and our infancy, we should find, probably, that our most vivid feelings of early *resentment*, if I may use that term in such a case, were not so much what is commonly termed *anger*, as what is more commonly termed *indignation*. Our deep and lasting wrath, in our nursery, is not against any one who exists around us, but against the cruel tyrant, or the wicked fairy, or

the robber, or the murderer, in some tale or ballad. Little generosity, in after-life, can be expected from him, who, on first hearing, as he leans on his mother's knee, the story of the Babes in the Wood, has felt no swell of anger, almost to bursting of the heart, against the "guardian uncle fierce," and who does not exult in the punishment, which afterwards falls on that treacherous murderer, with a triumph more delightful than is felt by the most vindictive in the complete gratification of their own personal revenge.

How truly is this virtuous indignation of the youthful heart described by Beattie, in the glance of stern vindictive joy which brightened the tear of the future Minstrel when the beldame related to him that vengeance of heaven which forms the catastrophe of this tale "of woes:"—

"A stifled smile of stern vindictive joy
Brighten'd, one moment, Edward's starting tear.
But why should gold man's feeble mind decoy,
And Innocence thus die, by doom severe?
O, Edwin! while thy heart is yet sincere,
Th' assaults of discontent and doubt repel.
Dark, even at noontide, is our mortal sphere;
But let us hope;—to doubt is to rebel;
Let us exult, in hope that all shall yet be well.
Nor be thy generous *indignation* check'd,
Nor check'd the *tender tear* to misery given;
From guilt's contagious power shall that protect,
This soften and refine the soul for heaven." *

It is by such generous indignation, indeed, that virtue is protected from the contagion of guilt, or

* Book I. stanza xlvii. and v. 1—4 of stanza xlviii.

rather, without such indignation, there is already no virtue to be protected.

If the little heart, in such a case, can pause, and think, this injury *was not done to me*, it may with equal temptation, in maturer years, unless saved by terror of punishment, be guilty of the very crime, which, as the crime of another, excites in it so little emotion.

The indignation, then, of mankind, may be considered as cooperating with the anger of the *injured individual*; but, unless in very atrocious cases, the general indignation is *slight* and *faint*, in comparison with the vividness of resentment in the individual. It is always sufficient, however, to sympathize with him; and this is sufficient for that just purpose which nature had in view. She has provided *one*, whose quick and permanent resentment will lead him not to let injustice escape unpunished; and she has provided, in the community, feelings, which readily accord with the direction of the united power of the state, against the injurer of a single individual. If there had been no such feelings of sympathetic anger, it may very easily be supposed that compassion for the criminal, who was afterwards to suffer for his offence, would, in many cases, obtain for him impunity; if, on the other hand, the indignation of the community were in every case equal to the original wrath of the individual directly injured, no opportunity could be afforded for the calm defence of innocence unjustly suspected. To have the punishment of guilt, it would be enough to have appeared to be guilty. In this universal frenzy of resentment, too,

it is very evident that not even a single individual in a nation could enjoy tranquillity for a moment. His whole life must, in that case, be a life of rage and vexation. "Omnis illi per iracundiam mœroremque vita transibit. Quod enim momentum erit, quo non improbanda videat? Quoties processerit domo, per sceleratos, illi, avarosque, et prodigos, et impudentes, et ob ista felices, incedendum erit. Nusquam oculi ejus flectentur, ut non quod indignentur inveniant." The zeal of the Knight of La Mancha, who had *many* giants to vanquish, and *many* captive princesses to free, might leave him still some moments of peace; but, if all the wrongs of all the injured were to be felt by us as our *own*, with the same ardent resentment and eagerness of revenge, *our* knight-errantry would be far more oppressive; and though we might kill a few moral giants, and free a few princesses, so many *more* would still remain, unslain and unfreed, that we should have little satisfaction, even in our few successes.

How admirably provident, then, is the Author of our nature, not merely in the emotions with the susceptibility of which he has endowed us, but in the very *proportioning* of these emotions, so as to produce the greatest good, at the least expense, even of momentary suffering. Some vivid feeling of resentment there must be, that the delays which may occur in the infliction of vengeance, may not save the guilty from punishment; but this vivid feeling, which must exist somewhere, nature, in ordinary cases, confines to the single breast of the sufferer. Some feelings of general sympathy with the resent-

ment of the injured, there must also be,—that the strength of society may be readily transferred to him, for the punishment of the injurer; and these general feelings Nature has formed to be of such a kind, as may be sufficient for the purpose which they are to answer, without being too vivid, to distract the attention of the multitude from their own more important concerns. The good which Nature wills, is *attained;* and is attained by means which are as simple as they are efficacious.

We have seen, then, the advantages which arise from that part of our mental constitution, by which individuals are capable of *resentment,* when personally injured, and of *indignation* when the injury has no direct relation to themselves. But resentment, admirable as it is, as a check even to that guilt which is not afraid of conscience or of God, may yet, in unfortunate dispositions, be a source of endless vexation to the individual who feels it, and to all those who live around him. It may arise *too soon,*—it may be *disproportioned* to the offence,—it may be *transferred* from the guilty to the innocent,—it may be too long *protracted.*

It may arise too soon; or rather, it may arise when a little reflection would have shewn that it ought not to have arisen. In the intercourse of society, it must often unavoidably happen, that there may be *apparent* injury, without any real desire of injuring. We may consider that evil as *intentional,* which was not intended; we may consider that as an *insult,* which was said, perhaps, with a sincere

desire of correcting, as gently as possible, some imperfection, which is not less an imperfection, because we shrink from hearing of it. To distinguish what simply gives us pain, from that which was intended to give us *unnecessary pain*, is no easy task, in many cases, and in all cases requires some reflection. According as the emotion of anger,—at least, any displeasure more lasting than a single moment,—*precedes* or *follows* this due reflection, it is to be viewed, therefore, in a very different light. The disposition which becomes instantly angry, without reflection, on the slightest semblance of injury, is, in common language, as you know, termed *passionate*.

Another form of a passionate disposition, arising, indeed, from the same cause, is that which involves the next error, which I have stated with respect to resentment, the disproportion of the anger and the offence. He who does not pause, even to weigh the circumstances, cannot be supposed to pause, to measure the extent of injury. He feels that he is injured, and all his anger bursts out instantly on the offender. It is this disproportion, indeed, which is the chief evil of what is commonly termed *passion*. Some cause of slight displeasure there may be, even when anger, in its violence, would be immoral and absurd. Yet such is the infirmity of our nature, that it is often no slight triumph over our weakness, to forgive a trifle with as much magnanimity, as that with which we have forgiven greater injuries. He who has truly pardoned in heart, as well as in profession, the political rival who has displaced him,

may yet be *very* angry with his steward or his groom; and it is no small panegyric of woman to be mistress of herself, though China fall.

To what cause, or causes, are we to ascribe this quickness of anger, on *small* occasions, when, if the occasion had been greater, the resentment would have been less? This apparent anomaly in our emotion, seems to me to arise chiefly, or wholly, from three causes. In the first place, any great injury is felt by us immediately *as an injury*—as an *important event* in our life—an occasion on which we have to act a part—and if we have any virtue whatever, our whole system of practical ethics comes before us. We remember that we *ought to forgive*, and we think of this *duty*, merely because the importance of the injury makes us feel, that, on such an occasion, we are heroes of a little drama, and must walk majestically across the stage.

In the second place, I may remark, that great offences seldom occur, without some little warning of suspicion, which puts us on our guard, and prevents, therefore, sudden exasperation. But what warning is there, that a cup is to be broken, or a pair of spectacles mislaid?

Still more important than these, however, though perhaps less obvious, seems to me the cause which I have last to mention, that any *great offence* is of course a *great evil*, and that the magnitude of the evil, therefore, occupies us as much, as our resentment, and thus lessens the vividness of the mere feeling of resentment, by *dividing*, as it were, its interest with that of other intermingled feelings. An

injury, which deprives us of half our estate, presents to us many objects of thought, as well as the mere image of the injurer. But when a servant, in his excessive love of order, has laid out of our way a volume which we expected to find on our table, or has negligently suffered the newspaper to catch fire, which he was drying for us, the evil is not sufficiently great to occupy or distract us; and we see, therefore, the whole unpardonable atrocity of the *neglect* itself, or of that overdiligence, which is often as teazing in its consequences as neglect.

Any one of these causes, operating singly, might be sufficient, perhaps, to explain what seems at first, as I have said, so very strange an anomaly; and their influence, as may well be supposed, is far more powerful, when they operate, as they usually operate together. The little evils, which fret us most, then, we may perhaps venture to conclude, produce this seemingly disproportionate effect, as being those, in which we do not feel that we have any great part to act—which are so sudden as to have given us no warning—and in which there is not sufficient injury, to divert our fretfulness from the immediate object, by the sorrow which might otherwise have mingled with our wrath.

A third error, with respect to this emotion, consists in transferring it from the guilty to the innocent. The species of disposition which has this character, is what is commonly termed *peevish* or *fretful*. Some trifling circumstance of disappointed hope or mortified vanity, has disturbed that serenity

which was before all smiles; and for half a day, or, perhaps, for many days, if the provocation have been a *very little more than nothing*, no smile is again to be seen. He whose unfortunate speech, or action, produced this change, may already be at the distance of many miles; but he is *represented* by every *person*, and every *thing* that meets the eye of the offended; and the wrath which he deserved, or did not deserve, is poured out, perhaps, in greater profusion than if he were actually present. It might then, indeed, have been a thunder-shower, which falls heavily for a while, but leaves afterwards a clear sky. It is now a fog, which lours, and chills, and which, in lasting long and dismally, seems only to threaten a still longer, and more dismal darkness. To a disposition of this sort, no voice is soft, and no look is kind; the very effort to soothe it is an insult; every delightful domestic affection is suspended,—the servants tremble,—the very children scarcely venture to approach, or steal past in silence, with a beating heart, and rejoice in having escaped,—the husband finds business to occupy him, in his own apartment, the instant and urgent necessity of which he never discovered before; and all this consternation and misery, have arisen, perhaps, from the negligence of a waiting-maid, who has placed a flower, or a feather, or a bit of lace, a quarter of an inch higher or lower than it ought to have been:—

> "How soft is Silia! fearful to offend;
> The frail one's advocate, the weak one's friend.
> Sudden, she storms, she raves! You tip the wink,
> But spare your censure; Silia does not drink.

All eyes may see from what the change arose;
All eyes may see—a pimple on her nose."*

We have seen, then, the nature of that character of anger, which is usually termed *passionate*, in its two varieties. We have seen, also, the nature of that other kindred character, which is usually termed *peevish* or *fretful*. There yet remains to be considered by us, one other form or character of excess in this emotion.

This fourth moral error, with respect to resentment, of which I spoke, is when it is *too long protracted*. The *disposition*, in that case, is said to be *revengeful*,—a disposition still more inconsistent with the moral excellence of man, than even that silly fretfulness of which I last spoke. The very *reason* of the peevish, is, for the time *obscured*, as much as their *serenity;* and, if this obscurity could be removed, so that they might see things as they are, they probably would cease to *express*, and even to *feel*, their petty displeasure. The revengeful have not, indeed, the folly of punishing the *innocent* for the offence of the *guilty;* but they punish the guilty, even when the guilt has been *expiated*, with respect to them, by every atonement which the injurer could offer; or they punish as *guilt*, what implied no malicious intention; and this they do, not unreflectingly and blindly, but with an understanding as quick to discern, as it is vigorous to execute. Man is too frail in his wishes and actions, to measure the offences of others with a rigid hand. "Mali inter malos vivimus." The very revenge which he seeks

* Pope's Moral Essays, Ep. II. v. 29, 30, and 33—36.

is a condemnation of himself. When he looks into his own mind, is it possible for him to say, Let there be *no* forgiveness for offence, but let *all* who have violated what is right, suffer the punishment of their wrong, in the same proportion, in which *I now measure out punishment?* Would no lurking remembrance of evil, on his part, check such a general wish as this? and, if he could not venture on the general wish, which must include his *own punishment*, how audacious must be that arm, which, exposed alike to the cloud that hangs over all, would yet call down the thunderbolt to destroy whatever is beneath it! For man to be revengeful, is as if a criminal, confined with his accomplices, and speedily to be brought to judgment, should, in some petty malice, against one of his fellow-captives, appeal to the speedier vengeance of those very laws, which all had violated, and which, falling in vengeance on the head of *one*, must fall upon the head of all.

Nature, as I have already said, has formed man susceptible of resentment, that the wicked, who fear *only man*, may have *something to fear;* but she has formed man to be *placable*, because long continued resentment would be itself an evil more severe than that which it avenges. He, therefore, who knows not how to forgive,—whose gloomy heart preserves, even in age, the resentment of youth,—unsoftened by the penitence of the offender, by his virtues, by his very misery, is to us like some dreadful being of another race, that walks the earth, cursing and accursed;—we shun him, as we would fly from some

malignant spirit, who, by looking upon us, could transfuse into us the venom which he feels;—we have no sympathy for *him*;—our only sympathies are with the object of his vengeance,—with that very object, on whom, in other years, we could have delighted to see the vengeance fall.

Such, then, are the abuses of that emotion, which, for the good of mankind, when not thus abused, Heaven has placed in every heart. The resentment, therefore, which Heaven allows only for the good that arises from it, is limited by the very nature of this good. It is, in the first place, a resentment, which pauses, till it have considered the circumstances, in which the supposed injury has been done, —in the second place, a resentment, which, even when, on reflection, intentional injury is discovered, is still *proportioned* to the *offence*,—in the third place, a resentment, which limits its wrath to the guilty *object*,—and, in the fourth place, a resentment, which is easy to be appeased,—which does not seek revenge, when the good of society would not suffer by the forgiveness,—and which sees in penitence, when the penitence is manifestly sincere,—not an object of *hatred*, but an object of love.

Such is the infirmity of our nature, that there is far more reason to apprehend, in every case, that we may have erred in the excess of our resentment, than in defect of it; and there can be no question, *which* of these errors is the less dangerous to the tranquillity of the individual. He may be very happy, whose resentment scarcely reaches that point, to which the sympathy of those around would ac-

company him; but he *cannot* be happy, whose habitual resentments go far beyond that point. It is of the utmost advantage, therefore, for our own peace, that we should learn, as much as possible, to regard the little vexations which we may, or rather *must*, often meet from the ill humour of others, or from the crossings and jarrings of interests opposite to our own, with the same patience with which we bear the occasional fogs of our changeful sky. The caprices of man are as little at our disposal, as the varieties of the seasons. Not to lay our account with these human vexations, is a folly very similar to that of expecting in winter all the flowers and sunshine of spring, and of lamenting, that the snows and sleet, which have fallen everywhere else, should have fallen on *our little garden.*

I will not affirm, that man can ever arrive at the stoical magnanimity of being able to say, with respect to every unjust aggression, to which he may be exposed, "No one can be guilty of a crime, that is great enough to be worthy of my emotion."—"*Nullius tanta nequitia est, ut motû meo digna sit.*" But we may be sure of this at least, that the more nearly we approach to that magnanimity, the more do we save from disquietude our own happiness, and very probably too the happiness of all around us.

"It is impossible for you to be injured," says a French moralist, with a sententiousness worthy of Seneca,—"it is impossible for you to be injured, but in your property, or in your self-love. If you

are injured in your property, the laws defend you, and you may say of him who has injured you, This man is unjust; he will be weaker than I. If you are hurt in your self-love, the reproaches which are directed against you must be either well or ill founded. If they are well founded, why have resentment against a man, who makes you feel the necessity of being wiser or better than you were before? If the reproaches are *not* well founded, your conscience reassures you; and what vexation can arise in the mind of him, who looks back only on virtues that delighted him when present, and delight him still in the remembrance? The reproaches are those either of a *friend*, or of an enemy. If they are the reproaches of a friend, say to yourselves, he is my friend; he could not mean to offend me. If they are the reproaches of an enemy, say to yourselves, this is what I should have expected; and why, then, should it astonish me, as if it were something *new*? Has your enemy carried his hatred against you so far, as to be guilty of a crime? You are already too well avenged."

The emotion opposite to that of resentment is gratitude,—that delightful emotion of love to him who has conferred a kindness on us, the very feeling of which is itself no small part of the benefit conferred. It is this, indeed, which mingles in almost every other species of love, and diffuses in them all additional charms. The child does not love his parent merely as possessing virtues which others around him possess perhaps equally; he loves him as his

constant benefactor,—the prolonger of that existence which he gave,—the provider against wants which are not to be felt till the gracious provider for them be himself probably no more. When a friend thinks of his friend, what a long period of reciprocal good offices does he seem to measure in a single moment with his eye,—what happiness conferred, what misery soothed! It is as if the friendship itself expanded with the length of that bright tract of enjoyment, the retrospect of which is almost a repetition of the pleasure that seems diffused over every step. In the pure reciprocations of conjugal regard, all this friendship exists, and exists still more intimately and closely. The emotion is not felt as gratitude, indeed, for every interest is so much *united*, that a kindness conferred and a kindness received are in such a case scarcely to be distinguished. There is happiness flowing from each to each; and the gratitude which each feels, is perhaps, if we consider it only as the emotion of the object that receives pleasure, due as much from the heart which has conferred, as from the heart which has seemed more directly to receive it. But still the remembrance of this mutual interchange of tender wishes and enjoyments,—of delights, and consolations that were almost delights,—is no small part of the general complex emotion, which renders the love of those who have long loved as permanent as it is pure.

"The Seasons thus,
As ceaseless round a jarring world they roll,
Still find *them* happy, and consenting Spring
Sheds her own rosy garland on their heads;

Till evening comes at last, serene and mild,
When, after the long vernal day of life,
Enamour'd more, as more remembrance swells
With many a proof of recollected love,
Together down they sink in social sleep;
Together freed, their gentle spirits fly
To scenes where love and bliss immortal reign." *

With what happy influence has heaven thus led mankind to benevolence, by making kindness *delightful* both to him who is the object of it, and to him who confers it! If no pleasure had been attached to virtue, we might still, indeed, have been virtuous, but we should have felt as if walking at the command of some power, whom it would be guilt to disobey, along a world of darkness. The pleasure that flows around us in acts of mutual kindness, is like the sunshine, that is light and gladness to our path; and if we owed no other gratitude to our Creator, we should owe it for this at least, that he has made gratitude itself so delightful.

* Thomson's Seasons, Spring, v. 1163—1173.

LECTURE LXIV.

RETROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS, HAVING DIRECT REFERENCE TO OURSELVES.—1. SIMPLE REGRET AND GLADNESS, ARISING FROM EVENTS WHICH WE CANNOT CONTROUL.—2. MORAL REGRET AND GLADNESS, ARISING FROM OUR OWN ACTIONS.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I considered our emotions of *anger* and *gratitude*, those *retrospective emotions* which have direct reference to *others*. The affections of this order, which are next to be considered by us, are those which relate more directly to *ourselves;* and, in the first place, those emotions of simple regret or gladness with which we look back on past events, *as mere events of advantage or disadvantage to us*, without including any notion of our own moral propriety or impropriety of conduct.

I have already, in treating of melancholy and cheerfulness, considered emotions, very nearly akin to these; the great distinction being in *the feeling of a particular object of emotion*, which is essential to the complex vivid feeling in one case; and which does not exist, in the other case. We are melancholy, often without knowing why we are melancholy; —cheerful, without knowing why we are more cheerful at one particular time than at another. But,

when we feel *regret*, we know what it is which we regret;—when we feel a *joyful satisfaction*, we know what it is which gladdens us; and our emotions, as felt by us, have a direct reference to their causes, the conception of which coexists with them in one complex state of mind. Melancholy, indeed, is often the result of *regret*, as *cheerfulness* is of any *extraordinary joy*; that is to say, we are grieved at some event, and our mind afterwards, of itself, continues in a state of sadness, without any thought of its cause;—we are gladdened by some particular event, and our mind afterwards, of itself, without the remembrance of the cause of joy, continues in a state, in which happiness seems to be a part of its very essence; as if *not to be happy*, and *not to exist*, were nearly the same. The *immediate* and the *retrospective* emotions, however, which are distinguished by the peculiar names of melancholy and cheerfulness, in the one case, regret and gladness in the other case,—are sufficiently distinguished by that *reference to the past*,—the retrospective feeling which does, or does not, attend them.

As a mere vivid *feeling, indeed*, the regret which affects us on any unfortunate occurrence, *may*, on a minute analysis, be found to be the same, or at least nearly the same, as the *general melancholy*, or *sadness*, which we feel, without thinking of its cause,—the regret differing from the melancholy, not as a *mere vivid feeling of emotion*, but merely as a *complex state* of the mind, of which sadness is a *part*, differs from the simpler state, in which sadness is all that constitutes the momentary feeling. If this ana-

lysis be accurate, as I conceive it to be, the terms may be truly convertible;—so that *regret* may be said to be only *melancholy* combined with the conception of a cause of the melancholy; and melancholy itself to be only *regret*, abstracted from the conception of its cause. A similar minute analysis, by separating, in every complex *emotion*, that part which may be considered as peculiarly constituting the vivid feeling which is marked by that name, from the *conception of the object*, which may or may not accompany it, and which may be various, when the emotion itself, as a mere emotion, is the same,—might be made in other cases, so as to reduce, with sufficient philosophic precision, the vocabulary of our feelings of this class, as elementary feelings, to the very few which I enumerated, in entering on the consideration of our emotions. I have preferred, however, for the reasons repeatedly stated by me, the consideration of our emotions, in that *complex form*, in which they usually present themselves, since the consideration of them in this state of complexity in which they usually exist, has many advantages, and does not preclude the analysis which may be necessary for pointing out to you, in each complex emotion, the elementary feelings that seem to compose it. There are clear and definite lines of distinction, which the emotions, in their complex form, present, that are themselves too striking to be neglected, as principles of arrangement;—and there are *bearings on practical ethics*, which it seemed to me still more important to point out to you,—relations which the systematic review of our emotions, together with the

various objects of our emotions, that give them their common distinctive names, and that, if they do not alter the very nature of the vivid feelings themselves, at least diversify them in many important aspects, affords an easy opportunity of developing,—but which would be lost in the more general consideration of them, if arranged as mere elementary feelings, without regard to their objects.

Though the *regret*, then, which we feel, in thinking of any unfortunate event, and the *gladness*, which we feel, in thinking of any event that *has been*, or *promises* to be beneficial, may, as mere vivid feelings of *emotion*, be the same, or nearly the same, as the more permanent feelings of joy or sadness, which we term cheerfulness or melancholy,—that continue, without any reference of the mind, to the past events which may have given occasion to them,—still the retrospective reference is so important a part of the complex whole, that the emotion, which involves this reference, may admit with advantage, of separate consideration.

The emotions, which we are now considering, may be regarded, in their almost infinite relations, as the great diversifiers of the happiness of our days, very nearly as light and shade, that flow over every thing around us, are the diversifiers of that physical scene of things, on which we are placed. How few events can happen, that have any direct relation to ourselves, which may not be productive of some greater or less degree of gladness or regret; and, far from being thus confined to events, which primarily relate to *us*, our emotions of this kind do not

merely extend to everything that can happen within the wide circle of our friendship or acquaintance, but seem to diffuse themselves over the most distant ages and climes, as if we had a direct and primary interest in the happiness or misery of the whole human race. If everything at which we rejoice or grieve, in the course of a single day, could be imaged to us at once,—as we gather into one wide landscape, the lake, and the vales, and the rocky summits, which we have slowly traversed, it would be one of the most striking pictures that could be presented, of the social and sympathetic nature of man.

Even of the events, by which our personal interest is more immediately affected, and in which our regret or gladness, therefore, might seem exclusively personal, how few are there, which have not some relation to others; or rather, how few are there, of which others are not the immediate authors! What we term *chance* or *fortune*, in all those events of our life, which we characterize as fortunate or unfortunate, is only a shorter term for expressing *the actions of others*, in their *unintended* relation to *us;* and in the friendships and thousand rivalries of life, how much of intentional good or evil is to be added to what is casual! There is, perhaps, scarcely a single success, of which we give the praise to our own prudent conduct, that, if others had acted differently, might not have been adverse to us, rather than prosperous.

Regret and *gladness*, as thus arising from events which are, in most instances, absolutely independent

of *our conduct*, may seem at first to be themselves, in these instances, equally independent of any conduct on our part. But this is very far from being the case. Though the events may be independent, the feelings which they awake in us may depend, in a great measure, on our own former feelings. The same power of habit, which influences the *particular suggestions* of our trains of thought, influences also the *particular emotions*, which arise in different individuals, from the consideration of the same events, because the train of thought itself cannot be different, without a corresponding diversity of the emotions, that vary with the varying images. How few events are productive *only* of *advantage* or *disadvantage!* By far the greater number are productive of both,—of *advantage*, which, if it existed *alone*, would excite *gladness*, of *disadvantage*, which, if it existed alone, would excite regret, and of which, as existing together, the *resulting emotion* is *different*, according to the preponderance of the opposing causes of regret or gladness,—that is to say, according as more or fewer images of regret or gladness spontaneously arise to our mind, or according as we examine and analyse, more or less fully, the one or the other of these sources of mingled joy and sorrow. There are many *advantages*, of what is *apparently evil*, that cannot be *known to us*, unless we *reflect* on *consequences* which are not immediately apparent; many evils of what is apparently profitable, that may be discovered, in like manner, but discovered only after reflection. We cannot change events, indeed,

in many instances; but in all of these, the aspect of events, at least, may be changed as our attention is more or less turned to the consequences that may result from them. To wish, is, in this case, almost to produce what we wish. Our very desire of tracing the *consequences* that are *favourable to our happiness*, will be followed by the suggestion of these, rather than of others, in the same manner as our other desires are always followed by the suggestion of images accordant with them. Our mere intention of describing a beautiful landscape, for example, which is but a desire like any other of our desires, is followed by the *images of rural beauty*, that rise, in succession, to our choice, when, if our intention had been to describe the horrors of some scene of ruggedness and desolation, that principle of spontaneous suggestion, to which, in such a case of picturing, we give a peculiar name, as if it were a distinct power, and term it *fancy*, would have presented to us, indeed, as many images as in the gayer landscape, but images of a very different kind. With what varied conceptions was the mind of Milton filled, when, after describing Pandemonium and its guilty inhabitants, he seemed to breathe, as it were, a purer atmosphere of freshness and delight, in describing the groves of Paradise, and that almost celestial pair, whose majestic innocence seemed of itself to indicate the recent presence of the God from whom they came, and without whom, to enjoy at once, and to animate it, even Paradise itself would have been a desert! In this sudden change of conceptions that

crowded on his imagination, the *mind* of Milton was still itself the same. The images, in all their variety, arose still according to the same simple laws of suggestion. They arose variously, only because a single wish of his mind was varied. He had resolved to describe the magnificent horrors of an infernal palace; he resolved afterwards to describe the delightful magnificence of nature, as it might seem to have shone in original beauty, when it still reflected that smile of its Creator which pronounced it to be good; and all which would have been necessary to reverse the whole store of imagery,—to convert Paradise, in his mind, into the burning lake, and Pandemonium itself into the bowers of Eden, would have been the change of that single wish which seemed almost to have been creative. If our desire is thus capable of modifying the whole train of suggestion, in that process in which the mind is said to invent, it is not less capable of modifying it in cases in which we never think that we are inventive. In the whole train of our thought, our conceptions, and the attendant emotions which they induce, still correspond with our prevalent wishes. When an occurrence may be productive of good and evil, the good may arise to us, because our general frame of mind is accordant with wishes, and, therefore, with conceptions of good; or the evil only may arise to that gloomy spirit which does not find good, merely because it does not seek to find it. A different general character of thought,—the associations, perhaps, of a few years,—a single prevailing notion,

may in this way be sufficient, on the contemplation of the same event, to convert gladness into regret, regret itself into gladness.

Even when the same event is thus viewed by two different minds,—and the same consequences, in every *other* respect, arise to both minds,—how important a difference must there be, in the general resulting emotion, according as the two minds are *more* or *less* accustomed to view all the events of nature, as a part of a great design, of which the Author is the benevolent willer of happiness, or of the means of happiness! The mere difference of the habit, in this respect, is to the individuals almost the same thing, as if the events themselves had been in their own absolute nature diversified.

The *same events*, therefore, in external circumstances exactly the same, may be productive, to the mind, of *emotions that are very different*, according to its constitutional diversities, or acquired habits, or even according to slight accidents of the day or of the hour. We may *rejoice*, when others would *grieve*, or *grieve* when others would *rejoice*, according as circumstances arise to our reflection, different from those which would occur to *them*. Nor is the influence necessarily less powerful on our views of the future, than on our views of the past. We desire often, in like manner, what is evil for us upon the whole, by thinking of some attendant good; as we fear what is good, by thinking only of some attendant evil. The vanity of human wishes is, in this way, proverbial. We do not need those memora-

ble instances which Juvenal has selected, to convince us, how destructive, in certain circumstances, may be the attainment of objects, that seem to us, when we wish for them, to comprehend all that is desirable. The gods, says that great moralist, have overwhelmed in ruin whole multitudes, merely by indulging them with everything for which they prayed.

> "Evertere domos totas optantibus ipsis
> Di faciles." *

What is shewn, in such cases, only in the fatal result, to those whose scanty discrimination sees only what is or has been, and not what is to be, may, in some respects, be *anticipated*, by more discerning minds, that would feel sadness, therefore, at events which might seem to others to be subjects only of congratulation. Sagacity, when it exists in any high degree, is itself almost that second sight in which the superstitious of the wilder districts of this country put so much confidence. It looks, *far before*, into the futurity that is closed to common eyes. It sees the gloom in which gaiety is to terminate, the happiness that is to dawn on affliction, as, by supposed supernatural revelation, the Seer's quick, but gloomy eye, views, in the dance and merriment of evening, the last struggles of him who is the next morning to perish in the waves, or when a whole family is weeping for the shipwrecked son or brother, beholds on a sudden, with a wild and mysterious delight, that moment of joy when the well-

* Sat. x. v. 7, 8.

known voice of him who is lamented with so many tears, is to be heard again, as he returns in safety to the cottage-door.

It is not on the nature of the mere event, then, that the gladness or regret which it excites wholly depends, but in part, also, on the *habits* and discernment of the mind which considers it; and we are thus, in a great measure, creators of our own happiness,—not in the actions merely which seem more strictly to depend on our *will*, but on those foreign events which might have seemed at first to be absolutely independent of us.

If even simple *gladness* and *regret*, however, depend in some measure on the peculiar tendencies of the mind, the emotions, which we are next to consider, depend on them still more.

These are the *emotions* which attend our moral retrospects of our past actions,—the remorse which arises on the thought of our guilt,—the opposite emotion of delight, which attends the remembrances of what is commonly termed a *good conscience*.

I have already treated of the emotions which are distinctive to us of *vice and virtue in general*; but the emotions with which we regard the virtues and vices of *others*, are very different from those with which we regard the same vices and virtues as our *own*. There is the distinctive moral feeling, indeed, in both cases, whether the generous sacrifice, or the malignant atrocity which we consider, be the deed of another, or of our own heroic kindness or guilty passion; but, in the one case, there is something *far*

more than *mere approbation*, however pleasing, or *mere disapprobation*, however disagreeable. There is the dreadful moral regret arising from the certainty, that we have rendered ourselves unworthy of the love of man, and of the approbation of our God; or the most delightful of all convictions, that, but for our life, the world would have been less virtuous and happy, and that we are not unworthy of that highest of privileges, the privilege of fearlessly *adoring* Him, whom, if we worship truly with that gratitude which looks beyond the moment of suffering to the happiness of every world and of every age, it matters but little though the place of our adoration should be a *dungeon* or a *scaffold*.

When we look to some oppressor in the magnificence of his unjust power, surrounded with those inferior tyrants, that, while they execute their portion of delegated guilt, tremble at the very glance of him whose frown can make them nothing,—with *armies*, whom victory after victory has rendered *as* illustrious, as slaves that carry slavery with them, and spread it wherever their arms prevail, can *hope* to be;—when we enter the chambers of state, in which he gives himself to public view, and see only the festival, and listen only to voices that are either happy, or seem to be happy,—does all this splendour impose upon our *heart*, as it would half-seduce our *senses* into momentary admiration? Do we think, that God has reserved *all* punishment for *another world*, and that wickedness has no feelings but those of triumph in the years of earthly sway which consummate its atrocities? There are hours in which the tyrant is *not* seen, the very remembrance of

which, in the hours in which he *is* seen, darkens, to his gloomy gaze, that pomp, which is splendour to every eye but his; and that, *even on earth*, avenge, with awful retribution, the wrongs of the virtuous. The victim of his jealous dread, who, with a frame wasted by disease, and almost about to release his spirit to a liberty that is immortal, is slumbering and dreaming of heaven, on the straw that scarcely covers the damp earth of his dungeon,—if he could know, at that very hour, what thoughts are present to the conscience of him who doomed him to this sepulchre, and who is lying sleepless on his bed of state, though, for a moment, the knowledge of the vengeance might be gratifying, would almost shrink the very moment after from the contemplation of horror so hopeless, and wish that the vengeance were *less* severe. "Think not," says Cicero, "that Guilt requires the burning torches of the Furies to agitate and torment it. Their own frauds, their crimes, their remembrances of the past, their terrors of the future, *these* are the *domestic furies* that are ever present to the mind of the impious."—"Nolite enim putare, quemadmodum in fabulis sæpenumero videtis, eos, qui aliquid impie selerateque commiserint, agitari et perterreri Furiarum tædis ardentibus; sua quemque fraus, et suus terror, maxime vexat; suum quemque scelus agitat, amentiâque afficit; suæ malæ cogitationes, conscientiæque animi, terrent. Hae sunt impiis assiduæ domesticæque Furiæ." *

* Orat. pro Sex. Roscio Amerino, Sect. 24. (Gruter), or 67 of others.

The instance which I have now chosen, is that of a species of guilt with the conscious remembrance of which few of the great multitude of mankind can be agitated. But those who cannot oppress *kingdoms*, may yet oppress *families* and *individuals*. There is a scale of *iniquity*, that descends from the imperial *tyrant* to the meanest of the mob; and there are *feelings of remorse*, that correspond, not with the extent of the *power*, but with the guilty wishes of the offender. In the obscurest hovel, on the most sordid bed, there are sleepless hours of the same sort of agony, which is felt, in his palace, by him who has been the scourge, perhaps, of half the nations of the globe. There are visions around that pillow, which, in the drama or romance, indeed, would form no brilliant picture, but which are not the less horrible to him, whose *means*, but not whose *wishes of iniquity*, have been confined to the *little frauds*, that have swallowed up the pittance of some widow, or seduced into the same career of guilt with himself, the yielding gentleness of some innocent heart. To the remorse of such a mind, there are not even the same consolations, if I may apply the term of *consolation* to that dreadful relief, which, in rendering horror less felt for the instant, truly aggravates its ultimate amount. The power of making *armies march*, though it be only to *new desolation*,—of altering, in an instant, the fate of kingdoms, though it be only to render kingdoms *more* wretched,—has yet something in it, which, by its greatness, occupies the mind; and the tumult of war, and the glory of victory, and the very multitude of those, who bow

the knee and tremble, as they solicit favour, or deprecate wrath, afford at least a source of *distraction* to the mind, though they can afford *no more*. These sources of distraction the petty villain cannot share; —*His* villanies present to him no other images than those of the insignificant profits which he has perhaps already squandered, and the miseries which he has made. There are no crowds of flatterers to aid the feeble efforts with which he strives to forget the past. He is left with nothing more than his conscience, and his power of doing still more evil; and he has recourse to this desperate expedient, which, desperate as it is, is still less dreadful than his horror of the past. He adds villany to villany, not so much for any new profit, as to have something which may occupy him, producing wretchedness after wretchedness around him, as far as his little sphere extends, till his sense of remorse is at last almost *stupified*; and he derives thus a sort of dreadful mitigation of suffering, from the very circumstances which are afterwards to be the aggravation of his misery.

In these cases of fraud and cruelty, the progress of guilt, in every stage of it, might have brought to the mind of the guilty the evil on which he was *entering*, or the evil which he was *aggravating*. But what deep remorse arises often to minds originally of better hopes, that, on entering on the very career, which has plunged them in vice, saw no images but those of social pleasure; and that, after many years of heedless dissipation have elapsed, look back on the years which have been so strange

ly consumed, almost with the astonishment, though not with the comfort, of one who looks back on some *frightful dream*, and who scarcely knows whether he is awake.

> " Soft as the gossamer, in summer shades,
> Extends its twinkling line, from spray to spray,
> Gently as sleep the weary lids invades,
> So soft, so gently, Pleasure mines her way."

At the very suggestions of fraud and cruelty, the heart shrinks instantly, with a *horror*, which saves, from the guilt of injustice or oppression, all those, whose minds are not unworthy of better feelings; but the suggestions of *pleasure* present nothing to the mind, at least till indulgence have become excessive,—with which any feelings of loathing and abhorrence can be associated. The corruption of the mind goes on silently, and gives no alarm, till the mind is already *too corrupt*, to be capable of the vigorous effort, which would be necessary, for shaking off a power, that shackles and debases it,—but which seems still rather to *seduce*, than to *oppress*, and which is scarcely hated by the unfortunate victim, even while it appears to him, to have destroyed his happiness for ever.

> " O, treacherous Conscience! While she seems to sleep
> On rose and myrtle, lull'd with siren song;—
> While she seems, nodding o'er her charge, to drop
> On headlong appetite, the slacken'd rein,
> And give us up to licence, unrecall'd,
> Unmark'd—See, from behind her secret stand,
> The sly informer minutes every fault,
> And her dread diary with horror fills.

Not the gross *act* alone employs her pen;
She reconnoitres Fancy's airy band,
A watchful foe,—The formidable spy
Listening, o'erhears the whispers of our camp,
Our dawning purposes of heart explores,
And steals our wishes of iniquity."*

It is not, however, only when health, and fortune, and dignity, and the affection of those whom we love, have been completely sacrificed, that conscience comes boldly forward, and proclaims a guilt of which we were little dreaming. There are thoughts of higher objects, that rise to the mind, with an *accusation* which it is quick to feel, but which it hastens to forget, in a repetition of the idle and profitless, and worse than profitless, enjoyment. At length the accusation, which cannot be suppressed, is heard, with a more painful impatience, but with an impatience, which leads only to a *wilder riot*, in the hope of *stilling* murmurs, which are not to be stilled.

"The low
And sordid gravitation of his Powers
To a vile clod, so draws him, with such force
Resistless, from the centre he should seek,
That he at last *forgets* it. All his hopes
Tend *downward;* his ambition is to *sink*,—
To reach a depth, profounder still, and still
Profounder, in the fathomless abyss
Of folly, plunging in pursuit of death.—
But, ere he gain the comfortless repose
He seeks, and acquiescence of his soul
In Heaven renouncing exile, he endures—

* Young's Night Thoughts, B. II. v. 256—269.

> What does he not, from lusts opposed in vain
> And threatening* conscience—Riot is not loud
> Nor drunk enough to drown it. In the midst
> Of laughter, his compunctions are sincere,—
> And he abhors the jest by which he shines."†

On the happiness which attends the remembrance of a life of virtue, it would surely be unnecessary to enlarge. It is a happiness, of which even the *guilty*, —though they may be incapable of conceiving *all* its delight,—yet know sufficiently the value, to look to it, with wishes, that do not covet it the *less*, for coveting it *hopelessly*. Strange as it may seem, in a world in which vice is so abundant, there yet can be little doubt, that the only object of desire, which is truly *universal*, is the delight of a good conscience. The pleasures of power and splendour, and indolent luxury, strong as their sway is over the greater number of minds, find yet *some* minds, to which they are objects either of indifference or contempt. But who is there, who has ever said in his own soul, in forming plans of future life, *let me live and die, without the remembrance of a single good action?* There are crimes, indeed, conceived and perpetrated with little regard to that virtue, which is for the time abandoned. But there is still some *distant vision of repentance*, and better *thoughts*,—which are to be the happiness of *old age at least*,—that is present to the most profligate, when he ventures to look forward to old age, and to that event by which

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* Self-reproaching.—*Orig.*

† Cowper's Task, Book V. v. 587—600, and v. 614—617.

age *must* at last be terminated. It is not because virtue is wholly despised that guilt exists; but the great misery is, that the uncertain duration of life allows the guilty to look forward to years that are, perhaps, never to arrive, and to postpone every better purpose, till their heart has become incapable of shaking off the passions to which it is enslaved. Yet still, *repentance* and *virtue*, at *some period*, are delightful objects, which they never wholly exclude from their prospects of the future; and if it were possible to be *virtuous*, without *the sacrifice of vice*, they would not delay the happiness for a single instant.

The happiness of having something in past years, on which to look back with delight, is, then, a happiness, which is the *wish of all;* and if it were a thing that could be plundered, like mere wealth,—or invaded and usurped, like honour and dignities,—it would probably be one of the *first* things on which the robber would lay his violent hands, and which even the most frivolous aspirer, after the most frivolous trappings of courtly honour, would wish to obtain as soon, at least *almost* as soon, as that *wand* or *ribbon*, to which his ambition is obliged to be at present limited. *This*, however, though it is the *only* possession which is safe from violence or fraud, is still safe from these. The tyrant, with all his power, cannot divest of it the most helpless of those, on whom his tyranny is exercised; he cannot *purchase* it, even for a single moment, with all the treasures which he has amassed,—with all the

lands which he has desolated,—with all that *power* which, in his hands, far from facilitating the acquisition, only renders more *hopeless*, the attainment of those delights of conscience, to which he would still vainly aspire.

" Magne pater divûm,—sævos punire tyrannos
Haud aliâ ratione velis,—cum dira libido
Moverit ingenium, ferventi tincta veneno,
Virtutem ut videant, intabescantque relictâ.
Anne magis Siculi gemuerunt æra juvenci,
Et magis auratis pendens laquearibus ensis
Purpureas subter cervices terruit,—Imus
Imus præcipites quam si sibi dicat, et intus
Palleat, infelix, quod proxima nesciat uxor."*

And it is well for the world, that the only consolation of which the virtuous stand in need, cannot be forced from *virtue*, and usurped by vice. If the powerful could, by the promise of a reward, like that which the Persian monarch offered, obtain the means of forming to themselves, or purchasing at the same cheap rate, at which they purchase their other pleasures, that *new pleasure* of virtuous satisfaction, which nothing but virtue can give, vice would, indeed, have *little to restrain it;* and if he, who can order the virtuous resister of oppression to the dungeon, or to distant exile,—who can separate him,—I will not say, from his home, and his domains, and external dignities,—for the loss of these is comparatively insignificant,—but from all those, whom he

* Persius. Sat. III. v. 35—43.

loves and honours,—from that conjugal, and filial, and parental, and friendly kindness, which would now be doubly valuable,—when he might still have the comfort of seeing eyes, to which his own had often been turned in kindness, and of hearing voices, the very sound of which had often, in other griefs, been felt to be consolation, before the gentle meaning itself was uttered,—if the oppressor, who can strip his victim of all these present and external means of comfort, could strip him also of those remembrances, which allow him to look back on the *past* with satisfaction, and to the *future* with the confidence of one who knows, that, whatever his path may be, he is to be received, at the close of it, by that Being, whose majesty, awful as it is, is still only the majesty of a benevolence surpassing all earthly love,—if *this* could be done, *then*, indeed, might virtue, in this world, seem to be abandoned to the *vengeance*, or the *mercy* of the guilty. But *while these remain*, what is there of which the glorious sufferer,—I had almost said, if the words admitted combination, the happy sufferer,—can be truly said to be bereaved of? The friendships of those who are to meet again, and to meet for ever, are lost but for a moment;—the *dignities*, the *wealth*, are not *lost*; all that is valuable in them,—the remembrance of having *used* them, as Heaven wishes them to be *used*,—remains;—there are years of *happiness past*, and an *immortality of happiness*, which is separated from the past only by *a moment*, and which will not be *less sure*, whether that moment be spent in fetters, with the pity, and grati-

tude, and veneration of the good, or, with the same gratitude and veneration, be spent,—if a *moment* can be said to be *spent*,—in *liberty* and *opulence*.

Man, indeed, is too frail, not to yield occasionally to temptations; but he yields to temptations because he is *stupified* by passion, and forgets, at the moment, the differences of the state of the vicious and the virtuous, that in calmer hours are *present* to him, with an influence of which he delights to feel the power. If these differences—the mere contrast of the feeling with which the pure and the guilty look back on the years of their glorious or inglorious life—could be made *constantly present to the mind*, there is little reason to think, that all the seductions of power and momentary pleasure could prevail over *him* who sees what the good are, even in those adversities which the world considers as most afflicting, and what the guilty are, even in the midst of their enjoyments, without taking into account what they *must* be when those short and palling enjoyments have ceased,—

> "One self-approving hour whole years outweighs,
> Of stupid starers, and of loud huzzas,—
> And more true joy Marcellus exil'd feels,
> Than Cæsar, with a senate at his heels."*

"The wicked man," says Rousseau, "*fears* and *flies* himself. He endeavours to be gay, by wandering out of *himself*. He turns around him his unquiet eyes, in search of an object of amusement, that may make

* Pope's Essay on Man, Ep. IV. v. 255—258.

him forget what he is. Even then his only pleasure is a bitter raillery,—without some contemptuous sarcasm, some insulting laughter, he would be forever sad. On the contrary, the serenity of the virtuous man is internal. His smile is not a smile of malignity, but of joy; he bears the source of it *within himself;* he is as gay *alone* as in the midst of the *gayest circle;* he does not derive his delightful contentment from those who approach him; he communicates his own to *them.*

Such are the emotions which are excited in us when we consider the *past,* in reference to *ourselves,* as moral agents; and, if we knew nothing more of virtue and vice than these feelings alone, and knew, at the same time, that in a future state of existence there was a happiness destined for those who felt emotions of one or the other kind, could we hesitate for a moment, in determining in which class we were to look for *those,* by whom the happiness was to be inherited? It would not require any abstract notions of what is *morally good* and what is *morally evil.* The emotions themselves would distinguish, sufficiently, all that required to be distinguished. We should see in the agitation of a bad conscience,—in the terror that arose in it at the very conception of futurity, and of Him who presides over the future as over the past,—that the misery which was anticipated was already begun;—as in the tranquillity of the good, and the delight which they felt in the very contemplation of the perfections of the Divinity, we should perceive the commencement of that happiness which immortality was not to *confer,* but to *continue:*—

"Heaven our reward,—for heaven enjoyed below."

With these remarks, I conclude my view of our *retrospective emotions.* The remaining series of emotions, which we have still to consider, are those which relate to the future,—comprehending the important class of our *desires* and *fears*, as these are diversified by all the variety of the objects on which they can be fixed, and by all the variety of degrees of probability, with which the *good* which we desire can be expected, or the *evil* anticipated and *feared.* In this order of our affections, as in all the emotions already considered by us, we shall find abundant proof of the wisdom and goodness of that Being, who has given us our *passions* as he has given us our *intellectual faculties*, for nobler purposes than those of individual gratification,—purposes which the virtuous delight in *seeing* and *fulfilling*, and which the wicked *unconsciously promote*, even while they are regardless of the wisdom and goodness which protect the world, and equally regardless of that social world which is under this sublime protection.

LECTURE LXV.

III. PROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS, COMPREHENDING ALL OUR DESIRES AND FEARS.—DESIRE AND FEAR MAY ARISE FROM THE SAME OBJECT.—OUR DESIRES ALWAYS HAVE FOR THEIR OBJECT SOME GOOD, AND OUR FEARS SOME EVIL.—DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THAT GOOD WHICH CONSTITUTES DESIRABLENESS, AND MORAL, OR EVEN ABSOLUTE PHYSICAL GOOD.—CLASSIFICATION OF DESIRES.—WISH, HOPE, EXPECTATION, CONFIDENCE, DIFFERENT FORMS OF DESIRE.—1. DESIRE OF CONTINUED EXISTENCE.

GENTLEMEN,—In my original arrangement of our emotions, I divided them into three orders, according as their objects were regarded by us as *present, past, or future*—our *immediate emotions*, our *retrospective emotions*, our *prospective emotions*. In my last Lecture, I concluded my remarks on the *second* of these orders,—which, from their reference to the past, I have termed *retrospective*. One order still remains to be considered by us,—the emotions, which I have denominated *prospective*, from their reference to objects as *future*.

This order is, in its immediate consequences, the most important of all our emotions, from its direct *influence* on *action*, which our other feelings of the same class, and indeed all our other feelings whatever, influence, *only indirectly*, through the me-

dium of these. It comprehends *all our desires, and all our fears,*—our *desires,* which arise equally from the prospect of what is agreeable in itself, or from the prospect of relief, from what is disagreeable in itself,—our *fears,* which arise equally from the prospect of what is disagreeable in itself, and from the prospect of the loss of what is in itself *agreeable.* The same external object, agreeable or disagreeable, may give rise to *both* emotions, according as the object is, or is not, in our possession, or is, or is not producing any present uneasiness,—or, when it is equally remote in both cases, according as the probability of attainment of the agreeable object, or of freedom from the disagreeable object, is greater or less. Hope and fear do not necessarily relate to different objects. We *fear* to *lose* any source of pleasure possessed by us, which had long been an object of our hope; we *wish* to be *free* from a pain that afflicts us, which, before it attacked us, was an object of our fear. We *hope* that we shall attain to a situation of which we are ambitious; we *fear* that we shall *not* attain to it. We *fear* that some misfortune, which seems to threaten us, may reach us; we *hope* that we shall be able to escape. The hope and the fear, in these cases, opposite as the emotions truly are, arise, you perceive, from the same objects;—the one or the other prevailing according to the greater or less probability on either side. But though they vary with different degrees of probability, they do not depend wholly on a mere comparison of probabilities. They arise, or do not arise, in some measure, also according to the magnitude of the ob-

ject; our *hope* and our *fear* awaking more *readily*, as well as operating more permanently and *strongly*, when the *object* which we wish to attain, or of which we fear to be deprived, is *very important* to our happiness, though the *probabilities* on either side may be exactly the same as in cases of less importance, where *desire* and *fear*, if they arise at all, are comparatively feeble, and when often not the slightest emotion of either species arises:—

> "Pauca licet portes argenti vascula puri,
> Nocte iter ingressus, gladium contumque timebis,
> Et motæ ad lunam trepidabis arundinis umbram:
> Cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator."*

> "The needy traveller, serene and gay,
> Walks the wild heath, and sings his toil away.
> Does envy bid thee crush the upbraiding joy?
> Increase his riches, and his peace destroy.
> Now fears in dire vicissitude invade,—
> The rustling brake alarms, and quivering shade;—
> Nor light nor darkness brings his pain relief;—
> One shews the plunder, and one hides the thief."

There can be no question, that he who travels, in the same carriage, with the same external appearances of every kind, by which a robber could be tempted or terrified, will be in equal danger of attack, whether he carry with him *little* of which he can be plundered, or such a booty as would impoverish him if it were lost. But there can be no question also, that though the probabilities of danger be the same, the *fear of attack*, would, in these two cases, be *very*

* Juvenal. Sat. X. v. 19.—22.

different,—that, in the *one* case, he would laugh at the ridiculous terror of any one who journeyed with him, and expressed much alarm at the approach of evening;—and that in the *other* case, his own eye would watch suspiciously every horseman who approached, and would feel a sort of relief when he observed him pass carelessly and quietly along, at a considerable distance behind.

That the fear, as a mere emotion, should be more *intense*, according to the greatness of the object, might indeed be expected; and if this were all, there would be nothing wonderful in the state of mind, which I have now described. But there is not merely a greater intensity of *fear*,—there is, in spite of reflection, a greater belief of probability of attack. There is fear, in short, and fear to which we readily yield, when otherwise all fear would have seemed absurd. The reason of this it will perhaps not be difficult for you to discover, if you remember the explanations formerly given by me, of some analogous phenomena. The loss of what is valuable in itself, is of course a great affliction. The slightest possibility of such an evil makes the evil itself occur to us, as an object of conception, though not at first, perhaps, as an object of what can be termed fear. Its very greatness, however, makes it, when thus conceived, dwell longer in the mind; and it cannot dwell long, even as a mere conception, without exciting, by the common influence of suggestion, the different states of mind, associated with the conception of any great evil; of which associate or resulting states, in such circumstances, fear is one of

the most constant and prominent. The fear is thus readily excited as an associate feeling; and when the fear has once been excited, as a mere associate feeling, it continues to be still more readily suggested again, at every moment, by the objects that sugggested it, and with the perception or conception of which it has recently coexisted. There is a remarkable analogy to this process, in the phenomena of giddiness, to which I have before more than once alluded. Whether the height on which we stand, be elevated only a few feet, or have beneath it a precipitous abyss of a thousand fathoms, our footing, if all other circumstances be the same, is in itself equally sure. Yet though we look down, without any fear, on the gentle slope, in the one case, we shrink back in the other case with painful dismay. The lively conception of the evil which we should suffer in a fall down the dreadful descent, which is very naturally suggested by the mere sight of the precipice, suggests and keeps before us the images of horror in such a fall, and thus indirectly the emotions of fear, that are the natural accompaniments of such images, and that, but for those images, never would have arisen. We know well, on reflection, that it is a footing of the firmest rock, perhaps, on which we stand,—but in spite of reflection, we feel, at least, at every other moment, as if this very rock itself were crumbling or sinking beneath us. In this case, as in the case of the traveller, the liveliness of the mere conception of evil that may be suffered, gives a sort of temporary probability to that which would seem to have little likelihood in itself,

and which derives thus from mere imagination, all the terror, that is falsely embodied by the mind in things that exist around.

It is not, then, any *simple ratio of probabilities*, which regulates the rise of our hopes and fears, but of *these combined* with the magnitude or insignificance of the objects. Yet, whatever may be this mixed proportion of probability and importance, the objects of desires and fears are not to be considered as essentially distinct; since these opposite emotions arise, as we have seen, from the *same objects*, considered in different relations to us. There is nothing which, if it be not absolutely indifferent to us, may not excite both *hope* and *fear*, as the circumstances of our relation to it vary. This contrast of the mere circumstances, in which the opposite emotions arise, may save us from much discussion. It would be superfluous to consider all our desires in a certain order, and then to consider all our *fears* in a certain order, since we could only repeat, as to the one set of feelings, the observations previously made on the feelings that are contrasted with them. The consideration of our *desires* will be sufficient, of itself, to illustrate both sets of emotions, with a few remarks that may occasionally suggest themselves on the emotions of the opposite kind.

What, then, are our desires—or, rather, what are the objects which excite our desires?—for, with the mere feelings themselves I may suppose you to be fully acquainted; and any attempt to define them, as feelings, must involve the use of some word ex-

actly synonymous, or will convey no meaning whatever.

To desire, it is essential that the object appear to us *good*;—or rather, to *appear to us good*, and to *appear to us desirable*, are truly the same thing;—our only conception of what is *good*, as an immediate object of desire, being that it *excites in us, when considered by us*, this *feeling of desire*. If all things had been uniformly indifferent to all mankind, it is evident that they could not have formed any classes of things as *good* or *evil*. What *we do not desire* may be conceived by us to be *good*, relatively to others who desire it, but cannot seem to be *good*, relatively to *us*. It would be as absurd to say, that we think that *good* which we should be *very sorry to possess*, or even which we should be wholly indifferent whether we possessed or not, as it would be absurd to say, that we think that object beautiful, from the sight of which we shrink with an unpleasant feeling as often as we behold it, or which, when we turn on it our most observant gaze, excites in us no emotion whatever.

When I say, that to *appear to us good*, and to *appear to us desirable*, are only *synonymous phrases*, you cannot need to be told, that the *good* of which I speak, *as synonymous with desirableness*,—as that, in short, which *immediately* influences our *actions*, through the medium of our *desires*,—is not to be confounded with *moral good*, nor even with *absolute physical good*. What we desire,—far from being always *good*, in the sense in which that word corresponds with the phrases *virtuous* or *agreeable to the*

divine will, is often completely opposed to it. We may feel that we are desiring what is inconsistent with moral rectitude, and yet continue to desire it:—

"Video meliora, proboque;
Deteriora sequor."—

This is not what Medea only could say. It is the melancholy feeling of many minds, that are deserters from virtue, indeed, but that have still for the calmness and holiness of virtue, all that respect, which does not imply absolute obedience; and that, in yielding to an influence, of which they feel all the seduction, are rather *captivated* by vice, than *blinded* by it. Even with respect to *mere physical good*, without regard to moral excellence, we may *desire* what we know will be ultimately of injury to us, far greater than the temporary pleasure which it promises to yield; and, though it appears to us injurious upon the whole, and would be far from being desired by us, if it had no present charms, we may yet *prefer* it from the influence of those present charms, which are sufficient of themselves to constitute desirableness. The *good*, therefore, which is synonymous with *desirableness*, is not necessarily, and uniformly, however generally it may be, consistent with our *own greatest advantage*, or with moral propriety in our choice. It can be defined, in no other way, than simply as that which appears to us desirable, the desire itself being the only test, as it is the only proof of tendency in objects to excite de-

sire. That immediate good, then, of whatever kind it may be, which we term *desirableness*, because it is instantly followed by *desire*,—*absolute physical good*,—*moral good*,—are three phrases which have very different meanings; yet, obvious as the distinction is, we are very apt to confound them, merely because we have applied to them the *same term*; or at least to distinguish them very loosely; and, from this confusion, has arisen much of the controversy with respect to the influence of motives, and of the controversy, also, with respect to the universal influence of self-love in our benevolent affections, —disputations, that, in the mode in which they have generally been managed, seem to me to have thrown as little light, on the theory of morals, as they have contributed to the advancement of practical morality.

It is not, then, the highest *absolute physical advantage*,—nor the most undoubted moral excellence, —which, as soon as perceived, *is instantly followed by our choice*; that is to say, which forms, necessarily, the *immediate good, or desirableness*, of which I am at present treating;—the tendency of objects to excite in us emotions of desire. They may *coincide* with it, indeed; and they may *produce* it; but they do not *constitute* it. In many instances, they may render immediately desirable, what otherwise would not have seemed to us *good*, or would even have seemed to us *evil*,—*pain*, for example, and *privations* of various kinds,—which, but for views of ultimate advantage, or of moral propriety,

we should have feared rather than chosen:—but though there are minds to which those greater motives can make pain, and every form of present evil, an object of choice, and, in some cases, of ardent desire, there are also minds to which the same views of advantage, and of moral propriety, will not render the pains or privations, that are to produce the greatest ultimate good, sufficiently *desirable* to influence their feeble will,—minds, that consider objects chiefly as *present* or *future, near* or *remote*,—to which a moment is more than a distant age, a distant age but a moment; and the pleasure of an hour, therefore, if it be the pleasure of the hour that is already smiling on them, far more precious than the happiness of immortality. *Desire*, or *choice* itself, then, thus varying in different minds, is a proof only of the attraction of the object chosen —that attraction to which, of whatever kind it may be, I have given the name of *immediate desirableness*, in reference to the instant desire or choice which is its consequent. But though the choice is, of course, a proof of the attraction which has induced the choice, it is far from being a proof of that preponderance of ultimate gain, which it might be worldly prudence to prefer, or of that moral rectitude, which is the only object of virtuous preference. That mind is most *prudent*, in the common sense of the term, to which the *greatest amount of ultimate probable advantage*, is that which uniformly renders objects *most desirable*;—that mind is most *virtuous*, to which, in like manner, the *moral pro-*

priety of certain preferences, is that which uniformly confers on objects their prevailing attraction. But still, as I before remarked, we desire objects not merely as being *morally worthy of our choice*, or *ultimately productive of the greatest amount of personal advantage to us*, but for various other reasons, which constitute their immediate *desirableness*, as much, in many cases, or much more, than any views of morality, or calculations of selfish gain.

That we do not act always with a view to moral good, no one denies; for, of an assertion so proud, the conscience of every one would, in this case, be a sufficient confutation; and it is only a wretched sophistry, which makes us less ready to admit, that we act, in innumerable cases, with as little *immediate* view, at the very moment of our desire, to our selfish gain, as to morality.

I shall not, however, at present enter fully on this discussion, which involves some of the most interesting inquiries in morals. But, with a view to the discussion, in which we may afterwards be engaged, I must request you to bear in mind the distinction of that good, which is synonymous with *desirableness*, and of which the only test or proof, is the resulting desire itself, from *absolute physical good*, that admits of calculation,—or from that *moral good*, which conscience at once measures and approves. That which we desire must, indeed, always *be desirable*; for this is only to state in other words, the fact of our desire. But, though we desire what

seems to us for our advantage, on account of this advantage, it does not therefore follow, that we desire *only* what seems to us advantageous; and that what is desirable must therefore imply, in the very moment of the incipient desire, some view of personal good. It implies, indeed, that satisfaction will be felt in the *attainment* of our desire, and *uneasiness* in the failure of it; but the satisfaction is the *result* of the attainment, not the *motive* to the *desire* itself, at the moment when the desire arose; as the *uneasiness* is the *result* of the *failure*, not a feeling *preceding* the desire, and *prompting* it. The desire, in short, must have existed primarily, before satisfaction could have been felt in the attainment of its object, or regret when the object was not attained. To say, that we can desire only what is desirable, is, then, to say nothing in support of the theory, which would make our *advantage* the only motive of our desires; unless it could be shewn, by some other argument,—founded on actual observation or analysis,—that the feeling of our advantage, in some respects, *precedes uniformly all our desires*, so as to be, in truth, that which constitutes, in every case, the immediate and simple desirableness. If, on the contrary, it appear, that we desire many things, which, though they may contribute directly or indirectly to our advantage, are yet desired by us immediately, and without any view to this advantage, at the moment at which the desire arose, the argument, from the mere fact of the *desire itself*, must be absolutely nugatory. It either says nothing

whatever, or, by confounding the immediate desirableness with our own personal *gain*, it begs, or it assumes the very point in question.

Desirableness, then, does not necessarily involve the consideration of any *other* species of good,—it is the relation of certain objects to certain emotions, and nothing more,—the tendency of certain objects, as contemplated by us, to be followed by that particular feeling which we term *desire*.

I have said, that, with the feeling of desire, as the mere emotion thus produced by certain objects, you must all be sufficiently acquainted. It is a feeling which is, of course, in some degree complex, as implying always, together with the vivid feeling that arises on the prospect of good, the *conception* of the *object* which seems *desirable*: but the vivid feeling combined with this conception, seems to me of a peculiar kind, or at least to be something more than can be reduced to any of those elementary feelings which have been considered by us. It is not mere approbation or love of an object, as capable of affording us a certain amount of enjoyment,—but that which results from such love, as its effect. It is not the mere *regret* that is felt on the *absence* of a beloved object,—but a *prospective feeling*, which may, or may not, attend that retrospective regret,—and which, far from being painfully depressing, like regret, is, at least in many of its forms, one of the most delightful excitements of which our mind is susceptible,—the embellisher of existence,—and the creator of the greater portion of that hap-

piness, which it seems at the time only to present to our distant gaze. Love of an object,—regret at the absence of that object,—these feelings we may discover by analysis: but discovering these, we discover rather what gives birth to our wishes, than what constitutes them,—the sunbeams and the kindling incense from which the phœnix arises, rather than the vigorous bird itself, immortal, in the very changes of its seeming mortality.

To enumerate the objects of our desire and fear, would be to enumerate almost every object which exists around us on our earth, and almost every relation of these objects; without taking into account the variety of wishes more fantastic, which our wild imagination is capable of forming. A complete enumeration of all the possibilities of human wishes, is almost as little to be expected, as a complete gratification of all the wishes of man, whose *desires* are as *unlimited* as his *power* is bounded. The most important, however, may be considered as comprehended in the following series:—First, Our desire of continued existence, without any immediate regard to the pleasure which it may yield,—Secondly, Our desire of pleasure, considered directly as mere pleasure,—Thirdly, Our desire of action,—Fourthly, Our desire of society,—Fifthly, Our desire of knowledge,—Sixthly, Our desire of power,—direct, as in ambition, or indirect, as in avarice,—Seventhly, Our desire of the affection or esteem of those around us,—Eighthly, Our desire of *glory*,—Ninthly, Our desire of the happiness of others,—and, Tenthly, Our

desire of the unhappiness of those whom we hate. On these it is my intention to offer a few brief remarks, in the order in which I have now stated them.

I must observe, however, in the first place, that each of these desires may exist in *different forms*, according to the degree of probability of the attainment of its object. When there is little if any probability, it constitutes what is termed a mere *wish*; when the probability is stronger, it becomes what is called *hope*; with still greater probability, *expectation*; and, with a probability that approaches certainty, *confidence*. This variation of the form of the desire, according to the degrees of probability, is, of course, not confined to any particular desire, but may run through all the desires which I have enumerated, and every other desire of which the mind is, or may be supposed to be capable.

Hope, therefore, important as it is to our happiness, is not to be considered as a distinct emotion, but merely as one of the forms in which all our desires are capable of existing. It is not the less valuable on this account, however, but, on the contrary, the more truly precious, since it thus confers on us, not one delight only, but everything, or almost everything, which it is in our power even to wish. What hour of our waking existence is there, to which it has not given happiness or consolation?

I need not speak of the credulous alacrity of our wishes, in our early years, when we had only trifles, indeed, to desire, but trifles, which were as important to us, as the more splendid baubles that were pro-

bably to occupy, with a change of follies, our maturer ambition. "Gay hope is theirs," is one of the expressions, in reference to the happiness of boyhood, in Gray's well-known Ode; and there can be no question, that, even at that period, when we do not look very far forward, still a great part of the happiness that is felt, even when there is so much boisterous merriment of the present, is derived from a prospect of that little futurity which is never wholly absent from the view,—a futurity which may not in this case extend beyond the happy period of the next holidays, but which is still a field of hope, as much as that ampler field which is ever opening wider and wider on the gaze of manhood. In opening, indeed, thus wider and wider, it extends itself only to extend the empire of our wishes. There is, then, no happiness which hope cannot promise,—no difficulty which it cannot surmount,—no grief which it cannot mitigate. It is the *wealth* of the indigent, the health of the sick, the freedom of the captive. There are thoughts of future ease, which play, with a delightful illusion, around the heart of him who has been *born* in poverty, *bred* in poverty,—who, since the very hour when his arms were first capable of as much labour as could earn one morsel of his scanty meal, has spent his life, not in labour merely, but in unremitting *fatigue*,—to whom, since that very hour, a day of ease has been as much *unknown*, as a day of *empire*, with the exception of that single day, which, in its weekly return, is a season of comfort at once to the body and to the mind,—giving rest to

him who has no other rest, and revealing to him, at the same time, that future world, which is the world of those who have toiled on earth, at least, *as* much as the world of those who have subsisted by the toils of others. On the bed of sickness, how ready is the victim of disease to form those flattering presages which others cannot form,—to see, in the tranquil looks of those who assume a serenity which they do not feel, a confident expectation of recovery, which has long in *their* hearts given place to despair,—and to form plans of many future years, perhaps, in that very hour which is to be the last hour of earthly existence. If we could see all those wild visions of future deliverance, which rise, not to the dreams merely, but to the waking thought of the galley-slave who has been condemned to the oar for life, we should see, indeed, what might seem *madness* to every heart but his, to which these visions are in some measure like the momentary possession of the freedom of which he is for ever to be deprived; and, in this very madness of credulous expectation, so admirably adapted to a misery that admits of no earthly expectation which reason can justify, we should see at once the omnipotence of the principle of hope, and the benevolence of him who has fixed that principle in our minds, to be the comfort even of despair itself, or at least of miseries, in which all but the miserable themselves would despair.

Such is the influence of hope through all the years of our existence. As soon as we have learned what is agreeable, it delights us with the prospect of at-

taining it; as soon as we have lost it, it delights us with the prospect of its return. It is our flatterer and comforter in boyhood; it is our flatterer and comforter in years which need still more to be flattered and comforted. What it promises, indeed, is different in these different years; but the kindness and irresistible persuasion with which it makes the promise are still the same, and, while we laugh, in advanced age, at the easy confidence of our youth in wishes which seem incapable of deceiving us now, we are still, as to other objects of desire, the same credulous, confiding beings, whom it was then so easy to make happy. Nor is it only over terrestrial things that it diffuses its delightful radiance. The power which attends us with consolation, and with more than consolation, through the anxieties and labours of our life, does not desert us at the close of that life which it has blessed or consoled. It is present with us in our last moment. We look to scenes which are opening on us above, and we look to those around us, with an expectation still stronger than the strongest hope, that, in the world which we are about to enter, we shall not have only *remembrances* of what we loved and revered on earth, but that the friendships from which it is so painful to part, even in parting to Heaven, will be restored to us there, to unite us again in affection more ardent, because unmingled with the anxieties of other cares, and in still purer adoration of that Great Being, whose perfections, as far as they were then dimly seen by us, it was our delight to contemplate together on earth, when it was only on earth that we could trace them,

but on that earth which seemed holier, and lovelier, and more divine, when thus joined in our thought with the Excellence that made it.

Hope, then, which is thus *universal in its promises*, and *unceasing in the influence which it exercises*, is not to be considered as *one* emotion merely, but *as all our desires*, however various their objects may be. We *wish*, we *hope*, we *expect*, we *confide*; or, if there were other words which could express different degrees of the certainty of our attainment of what we desire, we might employ them with propriety; since every additional degree of certainty, or even any greater vividness of interest in the object itself, varies, in some measure, the nature of the desire which we feel. It is enough for you, however, to understand,—with respect to these words which express the more remarkable shades of difference,—that to *wish*, to *hope*, to *expect*, to *trust*, though expressive of feelings that must always be different, whether the *objects* of these feelings be different or the same, yet do not form *classes of feelings* essentially distinct from our general emotions of desire, but are merely those emotions themselves, in all their variety, according as we conceive that there is *more* or *less* likelihood of our obtaining the particular objects which we are desirous of obtaining. In a competition of any kind, in which there are many candidates, there is perhaps some one candidate who is aware that he has very little interest, and who has, therefore, scarcely more than a mere *wish* of success. He canvasses the electors, and he finds, to his sur-

prise, perhaps, that many votes are given to him. He no longer *wishes* merely, he *hopes*; and, with every new vote that is promised, his *hope* grows more vivid. A very few votes additional convert the *hope* into *expectation*; and, when a decided majority is engaged to him by promise, even *expectation* is too weak a word to express the emotion which he feels;—it is *trust, confidence, reliance*, or whatever other word we may choose to express that modification of desire which is not the joy of absolute certainty, like the actual attainment of an agreeable object, and yet scarcely can be said to *differ from certainty*. In this series of emotions, nothing has occurred to modify them but a mere increase of probability in the successive stages; and the same scale of probabilities, which admits of being thus accurately measured in an election that is numbered by votes, exists truly, though, perhaps, less distinctly, in every other case of desire, in which we rise from a *mere wish* to the most undoubting confidence.

You will understand, then, without the necessity of any further illustration, that *hope* and the various forms of our wishes and reliances, more or less vivid, are not a *separate class of emotions*, but are only names of *all* our desires, that vary according to the prospect of attainment which their objects seem to us to present. We may *wish, hope, expect*, or *trust*, in our attainment of some *rattle* in childhood, as we *wish, hope, expect*, or *trust*, that we are to attain the *scarf*, or *garter*, or *gold*, which is the amusement of our riper age. Even when we think of the noblest objects that can fill our mere earthly desires,—of the

happiness of nations, or of the whole animated world, when the patriot rises to shake some ferocious invader from that throne, to which he had risen by trampling on the bodies of those who had rushed boldly, but unsuccessfully, forward in the same heroic spirit of national freedom and deliverance,—or when the philosopher looks, through many ages of futurity, to the years which, as he trusts, are to perfect the great plans of heaven, in the diffusion of happiness and virtue to mankind,—he *wishes, hopes, expects, confides*, as the triflers around him are *wishing* and *confiding;* the only difference is, that the very wishes of the patriot and of the general philanthropist, are wishes which, though they should never be realized, it is dignity to feel even as wishes; and that the vain and sensual objects which occupy the whole heart of the idle and the profligate, are objects which it is disgraceful to desire with passion, and still greater disgrace, and still greater misery, even for those who have been capable of thus passionately desiring them, to obtain.

There is one other preliminary remark, which it may be necessary to make, before entering on the consideration of our separate desires. In the arrangement of our emotions, you must have observed, that no peculiar place has been set apart by me for the *Passions;* the reason of which is, that our passions are truly no separate class, but merely a name for our desires, when *very vivid*, or *very permanent.* It is impossible to state in words, at what degree of *vividness* or *permanence*, we cease to speak of a *desire*,—and term it a *passion.* This, it is probable,

that different individuals would do very variously; but all, unquestionably, would use these different terms, when there is any *very remarkable difference* in these respects. A slight desire of higher station, which comes upon us at intervals, and is soon forgotten in the cares, or in the delightful occupations of domestic life, no one would think of calling a *passion*, more than the individual himself; who smiles, perhaps, sometimes at his own little dreams of ambition, as if they were the idle musings of another mind, and, on awaking, looks at the tranquillity and happiness around him, with a sort of gladness that his dream was only a dream. It is when the wish of worldly power and splendour is not the emotion of a single minute, but the exclusive, or almost exclusive, wish of the heart,—when it allows, indeed, other desires occasionally to intervene, but recurs still with additional force, as if to occupy again what is its own possession, and to feed on new wishes of advancement, or new projects of obtaining what it wished before;—it is *then*, when the *desire* is *vivid* and *permanent*, that we term it a *passion*, and look, perhaps, with pity on him who is its victim.

After these remarks, which, I flatter myself, have pointed out to you some distinctions which it may be of importance for us to remember in our subsequent discussions, I proceed to the consideration of our desires in the order stated by me.

The first of these is our desire of our own continued existence. Strong and permanent as our wishes of delight may be, it is not *happiness* only which we desire, nor misery only which we dread; we have

a wish *to exist*, even without regard, at the moment of the wish, to the happiness which might seem all that could render existence valuable;—and *annihilation itself*, which implies the impossibility of uneasiness of any kind, is to our conception almost like a species of misery. Nor is it only when life presents to us the appearance of pleasure, wherever we look, and when our heart has an alacrity of enjoying it, wherever it is to be found, that the desire of a continuation of this earthly existence remains. It remains, and, in many instances, is perhaps still stronger in those years, when death might seem to afford only the prospect of a ready passage to a better world.

> "Da spatium vitæ; multos da, Jupiter, annos.
> Hoc recto vultu, solum hoc et pallidus optas."*

"O, my coevals!"—says the author of the Night Thoughts, at a time when he was himself advanced in age,—

> "O, my coevals! remnants of yourselves,
> Poor human ruins, tottering o'er the grave,
> Shall *we*,—shall aged men, like aged trees,
> Strike deeper our vile root, and closer cling,
> Still more enamour'd of this wretched soil!"†

To explain the apparent inconsistency of the increased love of life, that is so frequently observed in old age, when the means of enjoyment are diminished,—we must remember, that, by the influence of the

* Juvenal, Sat. X. v. 188—189.

† Book IV. v. 109—113.

suggesting principle, life, as a mere object of conception to the old, retains still many charms, which in reality it does not possess. The life, *of which they think*, is the life *of which they have often thought*; and that life was a life full of hopes and enjoyments The feelings, therefore, which were *before* associated with the notion of the loss of life, are those which still occur, on the contemplation of its possible loss, with the addition of all those enjoyments which a longer series of years must have added to the complex conception, and the loss of which, as one great whole, seems to be involved in the very notion of the loss of that life, of which the enjoyments formed a part. It must be remembered, too, that *if* life be regarded as in any degree a blessing, the mere circumstance of the increased probability of its speedy termination, *must* confer on it no slight accession of interest. This is only one of many instances of the operation of a very general principle of our nature; —the likelihood of loss being itself almost a species of endearment, or at least producing, in every case, a tenderness that is soon diffused over the object which we contemplate, that seems thus to be more lovely in itself, merely because, from its precariousness, we love it more.

Absurd, however, as the desire may seem, in such cases, it is, as a general feeling of our nature, a most striking proof of the kindness of that Being, who, in giving to man duties which he has to continue for many years to discharge in a world which is preparatory to the nobler world that is afterwards to receive him, has not left him to feel the place in which he

is to perform the duties allotted to him, as a place of barren and dreary exile. He has given us passions which throw a sort of enchantment on every thing which can reflect them to our heart, which add to the delight that is felt by us in the exercise of our duties,—a delight, that arises from the scene itself on which they are exercised,—from the society of those who inhabit it with us,—from the offices which we have performed, and continue to perform.

While these earthly mitigations of our temporary exile,—if I may venture to speak of *exile* in relation to a world which we have not yet reached,—are thus bounteously granted to us, there may, indeed, be a *fear of death* more than perhaps is necessary for this benevolent purpose, in the breasts of those who are too abject in their sensual or sordid wishes, to think of heaven, or too conscious of guilt to think of it with tranquillity. But to minds of nobler hopes, which, even in loving life and all which life presents, have not forgotten how small a part it is of that existence which it only opens to them, what objects are presented,—I will not say, to *reconcile* them merely to the simple transition in which death consists, but to make this very transition a change which, but for the tears of other eyes, and the griefs of other hearts, they may smile tranquilly, or almost exult, to see approaching! There are minds, indeed, which *may* truly *exult* at this parting moment, which can look back on the conflicts of this fading scene, like the victor of some well-fought field, who closes his eye in the hour of some triumph, that has been the triumph of Freedom more than of War, amid the

blessings of nations,—and who, in the very praises and blessings that are the last sounds of life to his ear, hears rather the happiness which he has produced, than the glory which he has won :—

"Death is victory;
It binds in chains the raging ills of life :—
Lust and Ambition, Wrath and Avarice,
Dragged at his chariot-wheel, applaud his power.
That ills corrosive, cares importunate,
Are not immortal too, O, Death, is thine!
And feel we, then, but dread from thought of thee?*
Death, the great Counsellor, who man inspires
With every nobler thought and fairer deed;
Death, the deliverer, who rescues man;
Death, the rewarder, who the rescued crowns!"†

How admirable is that goodness which knows so well how to *adapt* to each other feelings that are *opposite*,—which gives to man a love of life enough to reconcile him, without an effort, to the earth which is to be the scene of his exertions; and which, at the same time, gives those purer and more glorious wishes which makes him ready to part with the very life which he loved.

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*And feel I, then, no joy from thought of thee?—*Orig.*

† Young's Night Thoughts, B. III. v. 495—500, 511—515.

LECTURE LXVI.

III. PROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS.—1. CONSIDERATION OF THE DESIRE OF CONTINUED EXISTENCE, CONCLUDED.—2. DESIRE OF PLEASURE.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I began the consideration of that order of our emotions, which, from their relation to objects *as future*, I distinguished, from our *immediate* and *retrospective* emotions, by the name of *prospective*,—an order which comprehends our *desires* and *fears*,—the most important of all the affections of our mind, as the immediate directors of our conduct, which our other mental affections, of whatever species, influence only indirectly, through the medium of our wishes.

With respect to this order in general, I endeavoured to explain to you, how the *same* objects, agreeable or disagreeable, may, in different circumstances of our relation to these objects, as present or absent, give rise both to *hope* and to *fear*; and how different the feeling of the mere *desirableness* of an object,—which is nothing more than the relation of

certain objects perceived or conceived as *antecedents* to our *desires* as *consequents*,—is from the feeling of the *greater amount of personal advantage*, or of the *moral propriety of certain actions*; both which considerations, indeed, may produce the tendency to desire, in some cases, but do not necessarily constitute it in all;—the clearest perception of greater advantage from certain actions, which it would be worldly prudence to prefer, and of moral propriety in certain actions, which it would be virtue to prefer, being often insufficient to overcome other circumstances of momentary attraction, which thus obtain our momentary preference, even though felt to be in absolute opposition to our *good upon the whole*, and to that *virtue*, which is itself, indeed, a part, and the most important part, of this general good.

Since the *objects of desire*,—which are so various to different persons, that, perhaps, no two objects are regarded with the same interest and choice by any two individuals,—are not *limited*, even to the *infinity of existing things*, but comprehend whatever the wildest imagination can conceive, I stated to you the impossibility of any exact *enumeration of these objects*, such as might enable us to treat compendiously of the whole boundless variety of human wishes. All which I could venture to do, therefore, was to class the principal objects, that seem, in their nature, to involve that species of attraction, which, as immediately antecedent to all our wishes, I have termed *desirableness*,—that is to say, the most im-

portant of those objects, *which cannot*, in the ordinary circumstances of our nature, *be contemplated by us, without exciting the emotion of desire.* Of these, I enumerated the following:—Our desire of the mere continuation of our *being*,—our desire of *pleasure*,—our desire of *action*,—our desire of *society*,—our desire of *knowledge*,—our desire of *power*, whether of direct power, as in what is commonly termed *ambition*, or of indirect power, as in *avarice*,—our desire of the affection or esteem of those around us,—our desire of glory,—our desire of the happiness of others,—our desire of the unhappiness of those whom we hate.

All these desires, however, I stated, may exist in various forms, according to the different degrees of probability of attainment,—a simple *wish*, *hope*, *expectation*, *confidence*, being the *most remarkable* gradations in the scale,—though there are various intervening shades of difference, to which no name is given. They are not species of *desires essentially distinct*, but *modes of all our desires.*

Our wishes, when they exist with little force and permanence, are termed simply *desires*,—when they rise more vividly, and occupy the mind more exclusively, they are termed *passions.* The *vividness* and *permanence*, therefore, are the only circumstances, which distinguish our *passions*,—not any essential difference in the particular nature of the *desires themselves.* The slightest wish, which we scarcely feel as a very vivid emotion, becomes a passion, when it affects us strongly and lastingly. The most ardent passion, which may have occupied our

whole soul for half our life, if it were to rise only slightly and faintly, would be termed a mere desire.

After these general preliminary distinctions, I proceeded to the consideration of our particular desires; and, in my last Lecture, offered some remarks on the *first* of these, in my order of enumeration. Of the great *fact* of that *desire of life*, which you must see operating universally around you, you could not need to be informed; and my observations, therefore, were chiefly illustrative of that beautiful *adaptation* of our nature to the scene on which we have to discharge the various duties of men, that is effected *by this principle of our constitution*,—a principle, which renders the scene of those duties itself delightful, as the *scene of our continued being*,—of that *life*, which we love in itself, and which is associated, in our conception, with the scene on which every moment of our life has passed.

Instead, therefore, of viewing, in our *love of life*, a principle *disgraceful* to our nature, we may see in it, far more truly, a principle which does honour to our nature, because it answers *admirable purposes* in our moral constitution. What happiness would it be, to those who were to be confined in the most gloomy prison for a series of years, if, during all this long period of confinement, the very prison itself were to seem to them a delightful habitation, and when the hour of deliverance came, we had only to open the gate, and lead the prisoner forth to sunshine and the balmy breeze, which were not to be

the less delightful, then, on account of the captivity in which his former years were spent! I need not point out to you, how exactly the case, now imagined, corresponds in every circumstance, except in the gloom and narrowness of the prisoner's dismal abode, with that which truly constitutes our situation as temporary inhabitants of this delightful earth.

It is not the mere love of life, which is disgraceful in itself, but the *cowardly* love of it, which does not yield to nobler desires. Every wish which we can feel for objects that are apt to affect ourselves, has, of course, relation to the future, and, therefore, to some protraction of our existence, the wish of which must consequently be involved in every other personal wish, the most honourable which the mind can form. To desire the continuation of life, is to fear the loss of it; and to fear the loss of it, is to fear everything which may bring it into danger. Even the brave man, then, will *avoid* danger, where no virtue would lead to the exposure; but, when virtue requires exposure, he will scarcely feel that it is *peril* to which he is *exposing* himself. Glory, the good of mankind, the approbation of his own heart, the approbation of God,—these are all which the brave man *sees;* and he, who, seeing these, can sacrifice them to the love of mere animal life, is, indeed, unworthy, I will not say of *vanquishing* in a cause in which it is noble to *prevail,* but even of *perishing* in a cause in which it is noble to perish.

The next desire, to the consideration of which I proceed, is our desire of *pleasure;* to which the *fear*

of pain may be regarded as opposed. *Annihilation*, indeed, seems to us an *evil*, independently of the happiness or misery, of which it may *deprive* us, or from which it may *free* us. We love the mere contentment of our being, but we love still more our *well-being*; and existence is valuable to us, chiefly as that which can be *rendered happy*. He who formed us to be *happy*, of course formed us to be *deserving of happiness*. The desire, indeed, may be considered as almost involved in the very notion of happiness itself, which could scarcely be conceived by us as *happiness*, if it were not conceived as that which is an object of desire.

I may say, of the *love of pleasure*, what I have said of the *love of life*. As it is not the love or preservation of life which is unworthy of a brave and honourable man, but the love of *a life* that is *inconsistent* with nobler objects of desire; it is, in like manner, not the love of pleasure, which is unworthy of us,—for pleasure, in itself, when arising from a pure source, is truly as pure as the source from which it flows; but the love of *pleasure* that is *inconsistent* with our moral excellence. The delight which *virtue* gives, and which *devotion* gives, is no small part of the excellence, even of qualities so noble as *devotion* and *virtue*. We love men *more*, we love God *more*, because it is impossible for us to love them more, without an increase of our delight. In this sense, indeed, to borrow a beautiful line, which expresses *much* in a very *few words*,—

"Pleasure is nought but Virtue's gayer name."*

* Young's Night Thoughts, B. VIII. v. 573.

Even of pleasures, which do not flow immediately from virtue, but of which virtue is far from forbidding the enjoyment, how many are there which nature is continually *inviting* us to enjoy! There are seasons, in which we cannot move a single step, or look around us, or inhale a single breath of air, without some additional happiness. To move is delightful; to rest is delightful. It seems almost, as if the same sun, which is every where diffusing light, were diffusing every where happiness; and not *to be happy*, and not to *love* the *sources of happiness around us*, seem to us almost like *ingratitude* to the Author of these, and a sort of *rebellion* against that benevolence, which so manifestly *wills our enjoyment*. The words with which Beattie concludes one of the most beautiful stanzas of his principal poem, express, in this respect, a sentiment, with which it is impossible for us not to sympathize.—

"O, how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms, which nature to her votary yields,—
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields;
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of even,
All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of Heaven,—
O, how canst thou renounce—and hope to be forgiven!"*

The love of pleasure, then, is far from being unworthy of man; since all which we admire in the universe, all which raises us to admiration of the

* Minstrel, Book I. Stanza IX.

Author of the universe, is *accompanied with it.* We cannot love *virtue* without loving a *source of delight;* we cannot love *him,* who has made us capable of loving virtue, without a delight still more ardent. We *must* love *pleasure,* if we love *whatever is worthy of being loved.*

But the pleasures which attend virtue, or which virtue approves, are not the only pleasures which man is capable of feeling. He may have a sort of dreadful satisfaction in the fulfilment of the most malignant desires, or he may become the self-degraded slave of his own appetites. There are several gratifications, of which, though virtue may not forbid the temperate use, she forbids the intemperate *excess,*—not because they are *pleasures,* but because they render us incapable of discharging duties which we have to perform,—or, which is a still greater evil, deprive us even of the very *wish* of discharging our duties. In a former Lecture, I endeavoured to describe to you the melancholy progress of a mind which has yielded itself gradually, with fewer and fewer struggles, a slave to the tyranny of sensual passions,—of passions which *stupify* still more than they *enslave.* It is this *stupefaction* of better powers and feelings, which, *far more* than the loss of mere *fortune* and *health,* is the most *pathetic,* or the most *dreadful* image, in every such description of the sacrifices of the dissolute:—

> "Your friends avoid you.—Brutishly transform'd,
> They hardly know you;—or if one remains,
> To wish you well, he wishes you in heaven.

Despised, unwept, you fall,—who might have left
A sacred, cherish'd, sadly pleasing name,—
A *name* till to be utter'd with a sigh."

Even if nothing more than mere sensual pleasure were to be taken into account, without comprehending, in our estimate, the miseries of shame and remorse, and ruined fortune, and without any regard to those sublimer delights, which the sensual lose, and which they perhaps care not for losing, because they are incapable of conceiving them;—there can be no question, that in this *least important part of happiness*, which alone they value, they are inferior to *those*, who enjoy, indeed, those external pleasures, which it is only gratitude to heaven to enjoy, but who think of their senses as the sources of *instruction* more than as the medium of indolent luxury. We are not to consider, in our estimate, the *momentary* enjoyments only; we are to consider the *sensual pains*, as well as the sensual delights—the *languor*, the *satiety*, the *sickness*, the days that in ill health hang heavily without amusement, and the nights without repose, in which the mind that has no consolation within, is still *more restless* than the *restless body*. Yet these are the disquietudes, which, if combined with a dull repetition of amusements that are amusements no more, of splendour that ceases to afford pleasure, because it is a splendour which is even more familiar to us than the want of it, and of intercourse with smiling faces and vacant hearts, which agree with our own, as truly in the

listlessness and weariness that are *felt* as in the cheerfulness that is *affected*,—are what, if we have unfortunately entered on such a life, we strangely term a life of gaiety :—

> " Whom call we gay? That honour has been long
> The boast of mere *pretenders* to the name.
> The *innocent* are gay.—The lark is gay,
> That dries his feathers, saturate with dew,
> Beneath the rosy cloud, while yet the beams
> Of day-spring overshoot his humble nest.
> The peasant too, a witness of his song,
> Himself a songster, is as gay as he.
> *But save me from the gaiety of those,*
> *Whose headaches nail them to a noon-day bed!*" *

The innocent, indeed, *are* the gay; and their gaiety is not sickness and vexation, but *happiness*. It is a gaiety which flows so readily around them, that it is not easy to distinguish how much of it is derived from without, and how much of it has its source within. All which we perceive, is that they are happy, and that their happiness is not to be obtained without the innocence which leads to it. With this purity of heart, the very senses enjoy pleasures, which require no cost to produce them, but which surpass all the enjoyments which the extravagant luxury of the sensual can devise. In the first vernal walk of the lovers of nature, the sight of a single cottage, which speaks to them of the happiness of those who dwell in a scene so beautiful, of a single wild-

* Cowper's Task, Book I. v. 491—500.

flower, which, at the opening of spring, seems to *announce* the *continued* care of that God, who is again, as in former years, to cover the earth with all the profusion of his bounty,—gives to *them* a pleasure, which, if the proud and luxurious could purchase by the magnificence of their richest banquets, they would not be *magnificent* in vain.

The desire of *relief from pain*, may be regarded only as *another form* of the desire of pleasure; and in this sense, the *species of emotion*, which we have been considering, besides its relation to every accidental pain, comprehends all the *desires* that are involved in our bodily appetites, as distinguished in that analysis, which we formerly made, from the mere uneasiness which gives occasion to the desire; the desire of *food* or *drink*, for example, as distinguished from the mere pain of *hunger* or *thirst*, which must exist, as sensations, before any such desires, that are subsequent to the sensations, can be felt. In the same way, the desire of relief may be thought to comprehend that *emotion* which is next to be examined by us,—the *desire of action*; and, to a certain degree, it unquestionably does comprehend it; since long inaction produces a pain in our limbs, which prompts us to the necessary motion, as truly, as the long want of food produces a pain of a different sort, which prompts us to have recourse to that which alone can give relief to such a pain. But the *action*, of which I speak at present, as the object of a peculiar species of desire, is far more than this

desire of relief from muscular languor;—it is a *continued exertion*, which we do not abandon immediately, after freeing our muscles from this uneasiness, which soon passes away at the very beginning of exercise, but prosecute, perhaps, till we produce in them a pain of an opposite kind,—the pain of fatigue.

I am aware, indeed, that, according to the system of many philosophers, who consider our own selfish enjoyment as the sole object of our wishes, to speak of other desires, after mentioning the desire of *pleasure* as *one* of our emotions, must be absolutely superfluous; since the desire of *pleasure*, according to them, must, in some one of its forms, be the desire of *every thing, which man can immediately desire.* The remarks, which I made on this subject, in my last Lecture, have prepared you, however, I trust, for seeing the fallacy of this supposition; since, though every thing which we desire must have seemed to us *desirable*, as the very fact of the desire denotes,—and though the *attainment* of every such *desire* must be *attended* with *pleasure*, it does not therefore follow, that the *pleasure*, which truly *attends* this *fulfilment of desire*, was the primary *circumstance* which *excited* the desire *itself.* We may feel happiness from exertion of every kind,—from society,—from the discovery of truth,—from the good fortune of our friends, and yet have *desired these, without any view, at the moment of the beginning desire, to this resulting happiness*, and merely from the constitution of our nature, which leads us to desire *knowledge*, simply

as *knowledge*, because there is something of which we are ignorant, and which we may readily learn,—*society* simply as *society*. Nature, indeed, has attached pleasure to these, as she has attached pleasure to many of our functions, which we do not exercise on account of that pleasure. But in considering the origin of our desires, we are to think only of what is contemplated by the mind at the very moment when the emotion arises, of the circumstances antecedent to the desire, and not of circumstances which may, or may not, be its consequents. The mother derives pleasure from *loving her new born infant;* and a superficial thinker might say, in this case, as, indeed, many superficial thinkers *have* said, that she loves her infant for no other reason than this pleasure, and that, but for her own selfish delight, she could see it perish, without the slightest concern. A very little observation, however, is sufficient to shew us, that the love, in this case, though accompanied with pleasure, is, in its origin, *independent* of the pleasure, and must have preceded it, or the pleasure could not have been felt; for, if there had been no previous emotion of a peculiar love in the mother, to distinguish the infant from every other infant, where are we to find the peculiar pleasure, from which alone the peculiar love is said to be derived? What is so evidently true in this case, is true in many other cases. The emotion arises, and is *attended* with pleasure; but it does not arise on *account of the pleasure*. On the contrary, the pleasure is felt, because the emotion has *previously* arisen, and could not have been felt, *but*

for the *previous* emotion that is gratified. It is, as in journeying to some distant scene, at the call of business, or of friendship;—the landscape may be beautiful, and may delight us, therefore, in every stage of our journey, the very exercise itself may be pleasing. Without the journey, it is evident, that we could not have enjoyed this beauty of the scene, and this pleasure of the exercise; but we do not journey on account of these delights. At the same call, we should have traversed the same road, though the landscape had been dreary and desolate on every side, and though fatigue had converted the exercise itself into uneasiness. "Whate'er the motive," it has been said, by a poetical defender of this doctrine,—

> "Whate'er the motive, pleasure is the mark.
> For her, the black assassin draws his sword;
> For her, dark statesmen trim their midnight lamp,
> To which no *single* sacrifice may fall;
> For her, the *saint abstains*, the *miser starves*;
> The stoic proud, for pleasure, pleasure scorn'd;
> For her, affliction's daughters grief indulge,
> And find, or hope, a luxury in tears;
> For her, *guilt, shame, toil, danger*, we defy,
> And with an aim *voluptuous, rush on death*."*

This, indeed, though in verse, is as sound philosophy, as much duller philosophy of the same kind; but, powerful as it may be in poetic antithesis, it is as verse only that it is powerful,—not as a statement of philosophic truths. We desire, indeed, all these

* Young's Night Thoughts, B. VIII. v. 558—567.

objects, and, however ill-fitted some of them may appear to be productive of delight, we may, perhaps, feel pleasure in all these objects,—as we certainly should feel pain, if we were not to obtain what we desire, whatever the object of desire may have been;—but it is not the pleasure which was the circumstance that prompted our desire, when it arose—it was the desire previously awakened, which was accompanied with pleasure, or was productive of pleasure,—the pleasure being, in all these cases, the effect of the previous desire, and necessarily presupposing it. We desire the happiness of others, and we have pleasure in this desire; but, with the same capacity of mere love as now, we should have desired the happiness of others, though no direct pleasure to ourselves had followed our *generous* wish. We desire knowledge, and we are delighted with the attainment of it; but if the constitution of our mind had continued, in every other respect, the same as now, we should have felt curiosity, though it had terminated only in *simple knowledge*.

It is the very nature of our mind, as originally constituted with certain tendencies, that some *objects* should seem to it *immediately desirable*; as it is its very nature, that *certain objects* should seem to it immediately *proportioned* in symmetry, or *related to each other in various ways*. When we think of the series of numbers, two, four, eight, sixteen, we perceive, that *each* is the *double* of the number preceding, and we perceive this, perhaps, without any pleasure whatever—certainly, at least, independently

of any pleasures which may be felt. The mere *conception of the numbers*, as a primary feeling, gives rise to the feeling of the *relation of the parts of the series*, whether the discovery of the relation be, or be not, accompanied with the pleasure. It is, in short, the very nature of the numbers, so *conceived together*, to appear to us *so related*. It is the same with that relation of a different kind, which I have termed desirableness. When we are assured of the particulars of any fact, *connected with a speculation in which we may be engaged*, it is *impossible* for this fact to be considered by us, as something of which we are capable of obtaining more accurate knowledge, without being instantly *desirable*,—that is to say, without exciting in instant sequence our desire of knowing it fully. It seems to us desirable, as immediately as four is perceived by us to be the double of two, and eight of four; and it seems to us desirable, merely from its *very nature*, as a fact, illustrative of our particular speculation, as much as two, four, eight, appear to us related, instantly, and without any conception of the *pleasure* which we may feel in discovering the relation. Pleasure, indeed, attends the discovery; but it is surely very evident, that there *must* have been curiosity *before* the pleasure, or no pleasure could have been felt. Pain, or disquietude, attends the ungratified curiosity. But, in like manner, there must have been a *previous* desire of *knowledge*, or if there was no *previous* desire of knowing any thing, there could be no pain in the continued ignorance. The plea-

sure and pain, in short, however early, presuppose always a desire still earlier, or they must have been effects that arose from neither.

The *immediate desirableness* of objects is then, as I flatter myself you have perceived, something very different from the pleasure which *attends* the *fulfilment* of the *desire*, however much the pleasure, once induced, may afterwards become itself a new circumstance of attraction—and there is not, therefore, necessarily, any redundancy of arrangement, in speaking of other sets of desires, after having treated of the *love of pleasure*,—considered *simply as pleasure*, or *as relief from pain*. The very desires, indeed, which are thus separated from the *desire of mere pleasure*, *may*, when gratified, afford, perhaps, as *much real delight*, as those, of which pleasure was the simple object. But it is sufficient for our arrangement, that this pleasure, however lively it may be in itself, *did not constitute to us* the primary and instant *desirableness* of the *object*, or, in other words, was not *that circumstance*, which we had immediately in view, at the very moment *when our desire arose*;—the direct *antecedent*, in a train of feelings, of which that other feeling, which we term *desire*, was the *consequent*, and the instant consequent.

I return, then, to the consideration of those desires, which I have thought it necessary to *add*, even *after the desire of pleasure*.

The first of these, on the consideration of which I had scarcely entered, was the *love of action*. To be happy, it is necessary that we be occupied; and,

without our thinking of the happiness which results from it, nature has given us a constant desire of occupation. We must exert our limbs, or we must exert our thought; and when we exert *neither*, we feel that languor, of which we did not think before, but which, when it is felt, convinces us how admirably our desire of action is adapted for the prevention of this very evil, of which we had not thought; *as* our appetites of hunger and thirst are given to us for the preservation of *health*, of which we think as little, during the indulgence of our appetites, as we think, *during our occupation*, of the *languor* which would overwhelm us, if wholly unoccupied. How wretched would be the boy, if he were to be forced to lie even on the softest couch, during a whole day, while he heard, at intervals, *the gay voices of his playmates without*, and could distinguish, by these very sounds, the particular pastimes in which they were engaged! How wretched, in these circumstances, is *man himself;* and what fretfulness do we perceive, even on brows of more deliberate thought, —on brows too, perhaps, that, in other circumstances, are seldom overcast, if a few successive days of wet and boisterous weather have rendered all escape into the open air, and the exercises which this escape would afford, *impossible!*

"The sort of bodily pleasure, which we derive from exercise," says the author of a very pleasing little French work, on the theory of our agreeable feelings, "cannot be analysed, indeed, without becoming almost insensible. The pleasure which accom-

panies a motion of the hand, escapes from us, *by its littleness*; but it is not, on that account, the *less real*. Do not women, every day, save themselves from many hours of listless uneasiness, merely by a little motion of the fingers, in some slight work, to which they attach no other value, than as it is a source of this very amusement to them? The charm of the particular work itself, and the general pleasure of being occupied, have need of being combined, to make any sensible impression."*

Without the knowledge of the pleasure that is thus felt in mere exertion, it would not be easy for us to look with satisfaction on the scene of human toil around us,—which assumes instantly a different aspect, when we consider this happy principle of our mental constitution. Though we are apt to think of those who are labouring for *others*, as if they were not labouring for *themselves also*—and though unquestionably, from our natural love of freedom, any task which is *imposed* cannot be as agreeable, as an occupation spontaneously chosen—we yet must not think that the labour itself is necessarily an evil, from which it would be happiness for man to be freed. Nature has not dealt so hardly with the *great multitude*,—in comparison with whom the *smaller number*, for whose accommodation she seems to have formed a more sumptuous provision, are truly insignificant, and would be unworthy of this *seeming* preference, if the provision of *their* means of luxury, were all which is involved in the wealth which she

* Theorie des Sentimens agréables, chap. ii.

bestows on them. The wealth of the individual is valuable, chiefly as it leads to the labour of others, and presents, in the reward which it offers, an agreeable object, to mingle with the pleasure of the occupation, and to soothe and sweeten it, even when it rises to fatigue. How different would the busy scene of the world appear, if we could conceive that no pleasure attended the occupations, to which so great a majority of our race would then seem to be *condemned*, almost like slaves, that are fettered to the very instruments of their daily task! How different from that scene, in which, though we perceive *many* labouring, and a few at rest, we perceive, in the labourer, a pleasure of occupation, which those who rest would often be happy to purchase from him, and which they *do* sometimes endeavour to purchase, by the same means by which he has acquired it,—by exercises as violent and unremitted as his, and which have the distinction only of being of less advantage to the world, than those toils by which *he* at once promotes his own happiness, and contributes to the accommodation of others! It is pleasing, thus, to perceive a source of enjoyment, in the very circumstance which might seem most hostile to happiness,—to perceive in the labour itself, of which the necessity is imposed on man, a consolation for the loss of that very freedom which it constrains.

When we do not labour with our limbs, we must labour with our mind; and happy is it for our peace when this *mental* occupation can supply to us the place of *bodily* occupation,—which, to the rich at least, must

always be in a great degree dependent on the accidents of weather, and in some measure, too, on the society of others. He, to whom a book presents occupation, scarcely can be in circumstances in which this occupation is not in some degree at his command; and it is not easy to say, how much of happiness, and of that good humour which is no small part of morality, depends on the mere power of occupying ourselves agreeably with this *exercise of our eyes and mind*, as others, less happy in intellectual taste, are obliged to depend for occupation on exercises that require a greater number of circumstances to place them in their power.

"Choose any station in life which you may prefer," says Pascal, "combine in it every pleasure which seems capable of satisfying the desires of man; if he, whom we imagine placed in this situation, has *no occupation* or *amusement*, his languishing felicity will not support him for an hour. He must have something to withdraw him from himself, or he is necessarily unhappy.

"Is not the royal dignity great enough of itself to content him who is the object of so much envy? I see, indeed, that, in other circumstances, to render a man happy, it is necessary to turn him away from the sight of his own misery, though it be only to occupy his whole mind with the anxiety of bending his knee, or pointing his toe in a dance a little better than before. But is it the same with a *king*? Must *he*, too, be amused like others? Would it not be a sort of *insult* to the joy which he must feel, to occupy *his* soul with the thought, how he is to adapt

his steps to the measure of an air, or how he is to send one billiard ball most adroitly to meet another, —instead of *leaving him* to enjoy, in repose, the contemplation of that majestic glory which surrounds him? Let us make the trial. Let us leave the most magnificent sovereign without company, without occupation, to enjoy himself, in all his magnificence, at leisure; and the sovereign whom we have left to himself will be only a human being, that feels his miseries like other people. All this, therefore, is most carefully provided against; and there are never wanting round the person of kings a number of idle courtiers, whose only occupation is to watch the time of their leisure, that they may suggest instantly some new amusement in the intervals of public business, or of other amusements, and save them from the dreadful misery of being alone, and of *knowing what they are.*

"Man is so wretched a being," he continues, "that he would soon be tired of himself, without any external cause of dissatisfaction, by the mere feeling of what he is; and yet he is so vain and trifling a creature, that, full as he is of a thousand essential causes of disgust, the most insignificant trifle is sufficient to amuse him; so that if we were to consider him seriously, we should find far more reason to *pity* him for being capable of finding amusement in things so mean and frivolous, than for the distresses which truly afflict him.

"How happens it, that that man, who was a short time ago in such deep misery at the loss of his only son, and who, loaded with law-suits and quarrels,

was this very morning fretted with so many vexations, thinks of these evils no more? Be not astonished at the change; he is now entirely absorbed in other thoughts. He is occupied, and most completely occupied, in seeing where it is that a stag is to try to get a passage,—a weary stag, which his dogs have been pursuing since six o'clock. Nothing more is necessary to account for the transformation. Miserable as man may be, if only we can succeed in occupying him *in any manner*, he is no longer miserable,—he is happy."*

Of the truth of the great *facts*, which Pascal thus states in a very forcible and lively manner, there can be no question; but the conclusion which he draws from them is *surely* not the conclusion which is most suitable to our nature, and to the great object of Him by whom we were formed. It is much juster, as it is unquestionably far more pleasing, to trace, in this necessity of occupation, the evident marks of the intention of Heaven, that man, who is to exist among men, and who has powers of mind and of body capable of benefiting them in innumerable ways, is not to suffer these powers to lie idle. The languor which we feel when we cease from exertion, reminds us, at every moment, that we are not formed for inactivity,—that we have duties to discharge, which may become to us *amusement*, if we only deign to avail ourselves of pleasures that are constantly in our power,—and without which, all amusements and exercises, that are only the *mimicry of these very duties*, would soon become as wearisome almost as

* Pensées de Pascal, première partie, Art. VII. Sect. i, ii.

idleness itself, of which we are so ready to feel the misery, when it is *total idleness*, unoccupied with a single pastime. It is not to fly the sight of *ourselves*, and, therefore, of our *miseries*, as Pascal says, that we busy ourselves even in *trifles*; but because Heaven, that has formed us for *action*, has formed us, therefore, necessarily to busy ourselves with something, and to occupy ourselves even with trifles, rather than to be wholly unoccupied. In beginning to exert ourselves, or to take interest in the exertions of others, we have no thought either of misery to be avoided, or of happiness to be attained. We are already busy, before we have felt the happiness; we are already idle, before we have felt the misery of being idle. Nature does not wait for our *reflections* and calculations. She gives us, indeed, the power of *reflecting* and calculating, that we may correct the abuses of our desires; but the desires which are necessary to our own wellbeing, and to the wellbeing of those around us, she *prompts* without our *bidding*. She has formed man, with a nature that may suit him to every situation;—the *monarch*, with those passions and powers which are necessary for the humblest of his subjects;—the humblest peasant, with the passions and powers of those who are born of kings. The sovereign occupying himself with those voluntary labours which he denominates amusements, may feel, in these very amusements, the common nature which he shares with those who are toiling around him, in labours which they, indeed, term *labours*, and think, perhaps, that they would be happy, if only they had that ease which he finds so painful,

and from which he makes so many efforts to free himself, but which are to *them* what his *amusements* are to him, a *source of occupation*, a mode of shaking off that idleness, which, if general, would be inconsistent with the very being of society, and from which, therefore, man is warned or saved, by the languor that attends it. When we look at the *guards*, and the palace, and the splendour,—at all those crowds, which seem useful only as supplying to him more speedily every thing which his wants require,—it is scarcely possible for us to think, that a king has any necessity of labouring; but if we look within his breast, and see the constant appetite for occupation, which this ready supply of all his wants *inflames*, rather than mitigates, we discover the same necessity which we feel in ourselves,—the same proof, that man is formed to contribute his share of service to the general labours of mankind,—to be active even where this propensity of our nature can have no excitement from individual wants,—and to minister, in some sort, to the happiness of others, if he does not chuse to be the willing minister of his own unhappiness.

LECTURE LXVII.

III. PROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS. 4. DESIRE OF SOCIETY. —5. DESIRE OF KNOWLEDGE.

GENTLEMEN, after the desires which I examined in my last Lecture, *that* which is *next* to be considered by us, is our *desire* of *society.*

Man, as I have already said, is *born* in society, and dependent on it, in some of its most delightful forms, for the preservation of his infant being, which, without the protection of those who love him the more for the very helplessness that is consigned to their protection, would seem thrown into the world, only to suffer in it for a few hours, and, ceasing to suffer, to cease also to exist.

If man be thus dependent on society for the preservation of his early existence, he is not *less* dependent on it for the comfort and happiness of his existence in other years. It is to be the source of *all the love which he feels,—of all the love which he excites,*—and, therefore, of almost all the desires and enjoyments which he is capable of feeling. There is not one of his actions, which may not, *directly* or

indirectly, have some relation to those among whom he lives; and I may say even, that there is scarcely a moment of his existence, in which the social affection, in some one of its forms, has not an influence on some feeling or resolution, some delightful remembrance of the past, some object of future benevolence or resentment. We are born, as I have said, in society, and dependent on it for our existence; but, even if we could *exist* without society, we should not exist *as men*, not even as *savage men*,—for savages, rude as their intercourse is, are still *united together* by domestic affinities and friendships,—and have one *common land*, *as* dear to them, or, perhaps, more dear to them, than the country of the civilized is to its polished inhabitants. With our immortal spirit, and with all the glorious capacities that are developed in society, we should, but for the society that almost gives us a different soul, be only a species of wild animal,—that might not yield as readily, perhaps, to the stronger animals around as the weak of a *less noble race*, but which would hold with them, at best, a *perilous* contest,—miserable *within* the cave, and trembling to venture *beyond* it. "Make us single and solitary," says an eloquent Roman moralist, "and what are we? The *prey* of other animals, and their *victim*,—the *prey* which it would be most easy for them to seize, the *victim* which it would be most easy for them to destroy. Those other animals have, in their own strength, *sufficient protection*. If *they* be born to live apart, each has its separate *arms* to defend it. Man has no tusks or talons to make *him* terrible. *He* is *weak*, and

naked; but, weak and naked as he is, society surrounds him and protects him. It is this which submits to his power all other living things, and not the earth merely, which seems in some measure his own by birth, but the very ocean, that is to him like another world of beings of a different nature. Society averts from him the attack of diseases,—it mitigates his suffering when he is assailed by them,—it gives support and happiness to his old age,—it makes him *strong* in the great combat of human life, because it leaves him not alone to struggle with his fortune. —" Fac nos singulos: quid sumus? præda animalium et victimæ, ac imbecillissimus* et facillimus sanguis; quoniam cæteris animalibus, in tutelam *sui*, satis virium est. Quæcunque vaga nascuntur, et actura vitam segregem, *armata sunt. Hominem imbecillitas cingit:* non unguium vis, non dentium, terribilem ceteris fecit. Nudum et infirmum, *societas munit.*—Societas illi dominium omnium animalium dedit; societas terris genitum, in alienæ naturæ transmisit imperium, et dominari etiam in mari jussit. Hæc morborum impetus arcuit, senectuti adminicula prospexit, solatia contra dolores dedit; hæc *fortes* nos facit, quod licet contra fortunam advocare."†

Of a society, to which man thus owes all his *strength*, as well as all his *happiness*, it is not wonderful, that nature should have formed him *desirous;* and it is in harmony with that gracious provision,

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* *Al.* imbecillimus—*al.* vilissimus.

† Seneca de Beneficiis, lib. iv. c. 18.

which we have seen realized so effectually in our other emotions, that she has formed him to *love the society which profits him*, without thinking of the profit which it affords,—that is to say, without regard to this benefit, as the primary source of a love that would not have arisen, but from the prospect of the selfish gain. We exist in society, and have formed in it innumerable affections, long before we have learned to sum and calculate the consequences of every separate look and word of kindness, or have measured the *general* advantage which this spontaneous and ready kindness yields, with the state of misery in which we should have existed, if there had been no society to receive and make us happy. These affections, so quick to awake in the very moment almost of our waking being, are ever spreading in the progress of life; because there is no moment to the heart, in which the principle of social union is cold or powerless. The infant does not cling to his nurse more readily than the boy hastens to meet his playmates, and *man* to communicate his thoughts to *man*. If we were to see the little crowd of the busy school-room rush out, when the hour of freedom comes, and, instead of *mingling* in some general pastime, betake themselves, each to some solitary spot, till the return of that hour which forced them again together, we should look on them with as much astonishment, as if a *sudden miracle* had *transformed* their *bodily features*, and destroyed the very semblance of men. As wonderful would it appear, if, in a crowded city, or even in the scattered tents of a tribe of Arabs, or in the huts or very

caves of the rudest savages, there were to be no communing of man with man,—no voice or smile of greeting,—no seeming consciousness of mutual presence,—but each were to pass each with indifference, as if they had never met, and were never to meet again,—or rather, with an indifference which even those cannot wholly feel, who have met once in the wildest solitudes, and to whom that moment of accidental meeting was the only tie which connects them afterwards in their mutual recognition. The mere presence of a human being,—at least when there is no fear to counteract and overcome the affection,—is sufficient to give him a sort of interest in our wishes,—certainly, if he be in pain or want, an interest in our *compassionate* wishes,—as if he were not *wholly a stranger*; or rather, such is our love of society, that to be, in the strictest sense of the term, a *stranger*, is to us a sort of *recommendation*, as to be a friend, or even a common acquaintance, is also a recommendation, more or less strong, to the same diffusive regard. Qualities, thus seemingly opposite, excite an interest that is similar; because, opsite as the qualities are, they are still qualities of man,—of one, who, whether a stranger or a friend, shares our nature, and who cannot be wholly indifferent to those by whom that common nature is shared.

What is every *language* but a proof of the agency of that feeling which makes it delightful to us to speak and to listen, because it is delightful to us to make our thoughts pass into other hearts, or to share the thoughts of those other hearts? We use speech,

indeed, in its vulgar offices, to express to each other the want of bodily accommodations, which can be mutually supplied by those who know each others *necessities*;—and, as a medium by which these wants can instantly be made known, it is, in these vulgar offices, unquestionably, an instrument of the highest convenience,—even though it were incapable of being adapted to any other purpose. But how small a part of that language, which is so eloquent an interpreter of every thought and feeling, is employed for this humble end! If we were to reflect on all those gracious communications, and questions, and answers, and replies, that, in a little society of friends, form, for a whole day, a happiness which nothing else could give,—the few words significant of mere bodily wants would, perhaps, scarcely be remembered, in our retrospect of an eloquence that was expressive of wants of a very different kind,—of that social impulse, which, when there are others around who can partake its feelings, makes it almost impossible for the heart, whether sad or sprightly, to be sad or sprightly *alone*,—and to which no event is little, the communication of which can be the expression of regard. In that infinite variety of languages which are spoken by the nations dispersed on the surface of the earth, there is *one* voice which animates the whole,—a voice which, in every country and every time, and in all the changes of barbarism and civilization, still utters a truth, the first to which the heart has assented, and the last which it can ever lose,—the voice of our social nature bringing its irresistible testimony to the force of that universal sympathy,

which has found man every where, and preserves him every where, in the community of mankind.

I have said, that the mere *presence* of a *human being* is sufficient to give him a sort of interest in our wishes, *except in cases where there is some fear to counteract the affection* that is thus formed; and I have made this exception, to guard you against the fallacy of the theory, which, by dwelling on the cases that form the exceptions only, and omitting all notice of the happier feelings that are universal and original, would represent the natural state of man,—of *him* who exists only as he has been an object of affection,—as a state of mutual hostility, in which every individual is at war with every other individual. Of this theory, which, if not first stated, was at least first *developed fully*, by Hobbes,—I cannot but think, that it would be idle to offer any elaborate confutation, and that the attention which has been paid to it by philosophers, is *far greater* than it deserves. We need but think of the state in which man is born—of the fondness of the parent for the child,—of the child for the parent,—of that affection which binds a whole family together,—to perceive, that *all individuals*, who are only those very members of the families which we have been considering, cannot, in any state of society, be the *foes of all*, or even indifferent to their mutual interests; since, in that case, the whole race of mankind must have ceased to exist before the period at which they could be capable of existing, even in a state of war. Every one, it is said, is born to war with every one! But where are these natural combatants

to be found? The army which Cadmus raised from the earth, arose indeed only to combat and to perish in mutual destruction;—but they rose *vigorous* and *ready armed.* Man is not, in the circumstance of *his* birth, like those fabulous monsters that sprung, in his mere outward semblance, from the serpent's teeth;—he is the offspring of love, and his mind is as different as his origin. If he be born to war with man, he must be *preserved* for years, when his warfare may be effectual:—and where is he to be found in those years of weakness that intervene?—In looking for the natural combatants who are to be brought upon the stage of blood, where can the sophist hope to find them,—unless he look for them among those whom *peace* and *affection* have *previously* been nurturing? Wherever he finds *hate,* he must find a *love that has preceded it.* The state of nature, if it have reference to the infancy of each individual, has reference, therefore, to a period, which, instead of enmity, exhibits, perhaps, the strongest and purest example which could be imagined of disinterested love; and, if it have any other meaning than as significant of those original feelings, amid which every individual of all the tribes of mankind has been bred and sustained, it must relate *as much* to *one* state of society as to another. All states in which man can exist, must be alike states that are natural to him; and if man was always what he is now, he was, surely, even in the most savage state, not a *foe* merely,—for that is only *one* of his relations, and an accidental one,—but a *child,* a *brother,* a *father,* a *member* of a tribe, a *pitier* of the sorrows of others,

even though he might occasionally, under the influence of some passing resentment, inflict sufferings, which, if he had seen them inflicted by another, he would probably have hastened to relieve.

What, then, is the *state of nature*,—the state of nature of parents, sons, brothers, and tribesmen,—in which this enmity of all against all is supposed? It is very evident, that to make it such a state as may be consistent with the false theory of society which we are considering, we must not think of man as he is, or as he has ever been known to be. We must take away all the feelings of domestic regard, which are visible wherever he is to be found. *Fathers, mothers, children*, must be as indifferent to each other, as if no common relation had united them; nay, they must be willing to sacrifice, without compunction, the existence of any one of these, for the most trifling personal advantage;—the pity which we now feel so readily for the distress even of our very enemies must, in that case, be absolutely unknown to us, *even when the sufferer is she who gave us birth.* Is this a state of the *nature* of *man?* or have we not rather, as has been truly said, in making this very conception, supposed the nature of man to be destroyed? and, while we have preserved the same external form, substituted, for the mild nature of that which animates this form, the ferocious nature of some untameable beast, which makes no distinction of the hand that caresses, and the hand that strikes,—which breathes only carnage, and feels a sort of irritation, and almost anger, at the sight of

every thing which lives? Of *such* a being, *so* animated, this *may* be the natural state, but it is *not* the *state of nature of man.* The feelings which Nature most powerfully impresses on *him*,—the first impressions which she makes on his heart,—are sentiments of love; and if those first and most *powerful* feelings, which are as universal as the race of man,—the original feelings of every individual that lives, or has lived,—can be truly said to be *natural* feelings, to continue to exist as in *this first state of nature*, would be to exist with only *affection in the heart*, and with *expressions of this affection* in every *look and word.*

But we put *bars* and *locks* upon our gates,—we *carry arms*,—we make *laws* to direct the power of the state against injustice,—we have *prisons* and *executioners.* Is this formidable apparatus, it will be said, a part of a system of love? or, does it not rather *prove*, that man *trembles* at the thought of the *power of man*,—as he trembles at the thought of some pestilence, and takes measures of precaution for guarding against infection, and for curing it, or preventing the farther spreading of it, if infection has taken place?

It will be admitted, that these contrivances of offence and defence are *not* a part of the system of contrivances of *universal and never-failing love*; but, on the contrary, are indicative of a fear which implies the *possibility* of enmity in others, or at least of injustice, which, though it may imply no personal hatred, is, in its effects on us, the same as

enmity. But while these instruments of preservation from possible aggression are admitted to be proofs of *one* set of feelings in man,—of feelings which no defender of the general social nature of man has ever attempted to deny, as a part of that mixed constitution of good and bad for which alone he contends,—it may be asked, in like manner, whether the *domestic affections*, and the general sympathies of our nature, which exist as *widely* as *laws*, and have in every case preceded them,—whether all the institutions for the relief of the *ignorant*, and the *poor*, and the *diseased*, are proofs of any natural enmity of man to man? Injustice may, indeed, be *prevalent*, but compassion is surely not less so; and are we to find proofs of universal enmity in a love that is as universal as human sorrow?—

> "That Virtue known
> By the relenting look, whose equal heart
> For *others* feels, as for *another self*;
> Of various name, as various objects wake,
> Warm into action, the kind sense within:
> Whether the blameless poor, the nobly maim'd,
> The lost to reason, the declin'd in life;
> The helpless young, that kiss no mother's hand,
> And the grey, second infancy of age,
> She gives in public families to live,—
> A sight to gladden Heaven."

We are surely not to think of *man* as only a *prisoner* or a *jailer*; we must think of him, too, as *one*, who, if he suffers, receives relief from those who have no interest in relieving him, except that of their com-

passion itself; or who himself, with as little expectation of personal advantage, relieves whatever sufferings may come beneath his view. The truth is, that man has desires of various kinds, *malevolent* as well as *benevolent;* that, on whatever period of society we may chuse to fix, we shall always find many who are disposed to invade the rights of others, and who, in consequence of this mere possibility of aggression, render necessary all those general precautions, and the occasional punishments of which Hobbes speaks; —while, at the same time, we shall be equally certain of finding many, who not merely are without the inclination of invading the rights of others, but who gladly make sacrifices of their own personal comfort for their relief. That the state of society, therefore, when there are multitudes comprehended in it, is not a state of *unmixed friendship* or *enmity,* unmixed *virtue* or *vice,* but a state that is *mixed* of both;—that the first affections, however,—the affections which, if there be any that peculiarly deserve the name of *natural,* have surely the highest claim to that distinction,—are uniformly those of *love;*—and that while *all* must, in infancy, have felt this tie, which bound them to some other breast, it is only a *part* of mankind over whom those *malignant passions,* which can be said to be indicative of *enmity,* or even that *injustice,* which is indicative of *indifference* to others, rather than *malignity,* can be said to have any sway. We have all *loved,* and continued to love; we have not all *hated,* and continued to hate;—certainly, at least, we have not given

way to our hatred, as we have yielded our whole soul to the delightful emotions of benevolence.

Even the most unjust and malignant of mankind, it must be remembered, do not lose their *love of society*. They have their *friends*, or at least *those* to whom they give that name, without any suspicion that they are using an inappropriate expression. *They* would hate to be *alone*, as much as other people, even though they had no guilty remembrances, which made it doubly necessary for *them* to be *amused*. They must still flatter themselves, that they *enjoy* what they are not *capable* of enjoying,—the delights of that *cordial intercourse*, which is *sacred to the good*. These delights, indeed—the remembrance of consolations received, and of virtues strengthened, the *mutual esteem*, the *mutual trust*, the *mutual veneration*,—they as little can *possess*, as they can enjoy the pleasures of *conscience*, with no remembrances but those of guilt. Yet, though the reality of the social regard of others is denied to them, and though even if, in some singular instance, it were truly to be given to them, it would be impossible for them to put confidence in a friendship which they would know that they had not *merited*, and, therefore, could not fail to *distrust*,—they can still at least have the *riot* and the *laughter*, and as much of the appearance of social affection, as is consistent with perfect indifference, or perfect hatred at heart; and the *riot* and the *laughter* they *must* have, or be still more miserable than they are. The love of that society, which they have so deeply injured, is thus

fixed in *their* heart, as it is fixed in every heart;—and what proof could be stronger of its irresistible power? In the very prison, to which the indignation of mankind has driven them, as to the only place which *their* presence could not *pollute*,—amid wretches, as little worthy as themselves, of a single thought of momentary affection,—they still feel the influence of that principle which makes the *presence of man* necessary to the *comfort of man*, as, in better circumstances, it is necessary to his *happiness*. They must mingle with each other, though they have no plans of guilty co-operation to concert. It is still *something* in their dismal loneliness to have one, who may laugh at their blasphemies, and at whose blasphemies *they* may smile in return;—and to him, who has never known what friendship is, who has only crimes of which to speak, or crimes of which to hear, it is not a *relief*, but a heavy additional *punishment*, to be separated from wretches as guilty and miserable as himself,—from wretches, who would as gladly, or *more* gladly, assist in putting his shackles on, as they would assist in releasing him; and who, he knows well, will not laugh less loudly on that day when he is to be led forth to terminate, amid public execrations, his dreadful existence.

Such is the desire of social communion in man;—a desire, which no habitual penance of solitude,—no perfection of virtue,—no *perfection* of vice,—if I may use that phrase, can efface from the heart;—a desire, the existence of which is not more forcibly

demonstrated by all that leads man to mingle with man in happy society, than by the most miserable intercourse, which the wretched can form—by the feelings which continue to operate, when only guilt is congregated with guilt; and which make of that very *prison*, to which Hobbes would lead us for a demonstration that man is born only to be regardless of man, or hostile to him, the most irresistible demonstration of that great truth of social connection, which he would vainly adduce it to disprove.

The next of our desires which we have to consider, is our *desire of knowledge.*

When we think of what man *is*, not in his *faculties* only, but in his intellectual acquisitions, and of what he must have been, on his entrance into the world, as much in the state of society which is most *civilized*, as in the rudest state of savage life, it is difficult for us to regard this knowledge and absolute ignorance as states of the same mind. It seems to us almost as if we had to consider a spiritual creation or transformation, as wonderous as if, in contemplating the material universe, we were to strive to think of the whole system of suns and planets, as evolved from a mere particle of matter, or rising from nothing, as when originally created. We believe that they were so created, and we know that man, comprehensive as his acquirements are, must have set out in his intellectual career from absolute ignorance; but how difficult is it for us to form any accurate conception of what we thus undoubtingly

believe! The mind, which is enriched with as many sciences as there are classes of existing things in the universe, which our organs are able to discern, and which, not content with the immensity of existence, forms to itself sciences even of abstraction, that do not exist as objects in nature, and that *cannot* exist in nature,—the mind, which is skilled in all the languages of all the civilized nations of the globe, and which has fixed and treasured in its own remembrance, the beauties of every work of transcendent genius, which age after age has added to the stores of antiquity—*this mind*, we know well, was once *as* ignorant as the dullest and feeblest of those minds, which scarcely know enough, even to wonder at its superiority.

But, without taking into our consideration the rich endowments of a mind like this, let us think of one of those *humble* minds to which I have alluded. How vast are the acquirements even of a mind of this humble rank,—and acquirements, too, which a few years, that may be said almost to be years of infancy and apparent imbecility, have formed! Indeed, if all human science were to be divided, as Rousseau says, into two portions, the one comprehending what is common to all mankind, and the other only that stock of truths, which is peculiar to the wise and the learned, he can scarcely be regarded as delivering a very extravagant paradox, in asserting, that this latter portion, which is the subject of so much pride, would seem very trifling in comparison of the other. But of this greater portion,

we do not think, as he truly says, partly because the knowledge which it comprehends is acquired so very early, that we scarcely remember the acquisition of it, and still more, perhaps, because since knowledge becomes remarkable only by its differences, the elements that are common in all, like the common quantities in algebraic equations, are counted as nothing.

When we think, however, of the elements that are truly contained in this portion of knowledge, which the humblest of mankind partakes,—how much is involved in the possession and mastering even of *one* language,—in the accurate adaptation of each arbitrary sign to the thing signified,—and the adaptation, not merely of the *signs* of things to the *things themselves*, but of the nicer *inflections* of the signs to the faint and abstract relations of objects! If we knew nothing more of the mind of man, than its capacity of becoming acquainted with the powers of so vast and so *complicated* an instrument as that of speech, and of acquiring this knowledge in circumstances the most unfavourable to the acquisition—without any of the aids,—which lessen so greatly our labour in acquiring any *other* language far less perfectly in after-life,—and amid the continual distractions of pains and pleasures, that seem to render any fixed effort absolutely impossible, —we might, indeed, find cause to *wonder* at a capacity so admirable. But, when we think of all the other knowledge which is acquired at the same time, even by this mind, which we have selected as one of the humblest,—what observations of phenomena,

what inductions, what reasonings downward, from the results of general observation to particular cases that are analogous, must have occurred, and been formed, almost unconsciously, into a system of physics, of which the reasoner himself, perhaps, does not think as a system, but on which he founds his practical conclusions, exactly in the same way as the philosopher applies his general principles to the complicated contrivances of mechanics, or the different arts,—when we think of all this, and know that *all this*, or at least a great part of all this, *must have been done*, before it could be *safe* for the little reasoner to be trusted, for a single moment, at the slightest distance from the parental eye,—how astonishing does the whole process appear; and if we had not opportunities of observation, and in some measure, too, the consciousness of our own memory, in our later acquisitions, to *tell us how all this has been done*, what a variety of means must we conceive nature to have employed, for producing so rapidly and so efficaciously, this astonishing result! She has employed, however, no complicated variety of means; and she has produced the effect the more surely, from the very simplicity of the means which she has employed. The simple *desire of knowledge* explains a mystery which nothing else could explain. She has made it delightful to man to know—disquieting to him to know only imperfectly, while any thing remains in his power that can make his knowledge more accurate or comprehensive; and she has done more than all this;—she has not waited till we *re-*

flect on the pleasure which we are to enjoy, or the pain which we are to suffer. She has given us these, indeed, to *stimulate* our search, and in part to reward it, but she has *prompted* us to *begin* our search without reflection on the mere pleasure or pain which is to reward our activity, or to punish our inactivity. It is sufficient, that there is *something unknown,* which has a relation to something that is known to us. We feel, *instantly,* the desire of knowing *this too.*—Begin to the child, in the nursery, some ballad, which involves a tale of marvellous incident, and stop in the very middle of the tale;—his little heart will be almost in agony, till you resume the narrative; but his eye, before you ceased, was still expressive of that curiosity, of that mere desire of knowing what is to come, which is not painful in itself,—*producing* the pain, but not *rising from it,* when the narrative is broken,—and *affording* the pleasure, but not rising from the pleasure, when the narrative is continued. Why is it, that in such a case we feel delight? It is *because* our *previous* curiosity *has been gratified.* Why do we feel pain? It is because our *previous* curiosity has not been gratified; and to suppose that but for the pleasure of the gratified curiosity, and the pain of the ungratified curiosity, *we should have had no curiosity* to afford the pleasure or the pain, is a reversal of the order of causes and effects, as absurd as it would be to suppose, that, but for the existence of the flower, we should not have had the root or the stem which supports the flower,—that it is the light

which flows around us that is the cause of the existence of the sun,—and that He who created the sun, and every thing which the sun enlightens, is not merely revealed to us by that world of splendour and beauty which he has formed, but that it is the the *beauty* of the universe which is the *cause* of the *existence* of Him who created it to be beautiful.

Of the lively curiosity of which I speak, with relation to the tales of our nursery, you must *all* have some remembrance; and, indeed, it is a curiosity which, even with respect to such tales of fiction, does not cease wholly when we are obliged to assume the airs and the dignity of manhood. We *vary* our tales in these graver years, and call them romances, dramas, epics; but we are equally ready, in any moment of leisure, to be led away by any narrative of strange incidents; which is to us exactly what the simplest ballad was to us then. The pain which attends ungratified curiosity, is most strikingly proved by those tales which are often intentionally suspended at some most interesting moment, and *printed as fragments.* We feel, in such a case, a vexation that almost amounts to anger, as if the writer of the fragment were wilfully and wantonly inflicting on us pain; and there are many little injuries, which we could perhaps much more readily forgive. To be forced to read a succession of such fragments, would be truly, to any mind which can take interest in the adventures of others, a species of torture,—and of torture that, to such a mind, would be far from being the slightest which could be devised.

The curiosity, which is thus strikingly exemplified in the eagerness with which we listen to fictitious narratives, is not less strikingly, as it is certainly far more usefully exemplified, in the interest which we feel in the wonders of science. How many nights of sleepless expectation would be given to the chemist, if he could be informed, on authority which he could not doubt, that in some neighbouring country a discovery had been made, which threw a new light, not merely on what had before been considered as obscure, but on all, or almost all, the phenomena which had been considered as perfectly well known; —that, in consequence of this discovery, it had become easy to analyse what had before resisted every attempt of the analytic art, and to *force* into combination substances which before had seemed incapable of any permanent union! With what eagerness would he await the communication that was to put into his own hands this admirable power! It must be a distress, indeed, of no common sort, which could at such a period withdraw his mind *wholly*, for any length of time, from that *desire* which every thing that met his eye would seem to him to *recal*, because it would be in truth for ever present to his mind.

It is needless to extend the illustration through the variety of the sciences. We have a desire of knowledge which nothing can abate,—a desire that, in some greater or less degree, extends itself to every thing which we are capable of knowing, and not to *realities* merely, but to all the extravagancies of fic-

tion. We are formed to know; we cannot exist without knowledge; and nature, therefore, has given us the desire of that knowledge, which is essential not to our pleasure merely, but to our very being.

"Witness the sprightly joy, when aught unknown
Strikes the quick sense, and wakes each active power
To brisker measures;—witness the neglect
Of all familiar objects, though beheld
With transport once;—the fond attentive gaze
Of young astonishment, the sober zeal
Of age commenting on prodigious things.
For such the bounteous providence of heaven,
In every breast implanting this desire
Of objects new and strange,—to urge us on,
With unremitted labour, to pursue
Those sacred stores, that wait the ripening soul,
In Truth's exhaustless bosom.—What need words
To paint its power?—For this the daring youth
Breaks from his weeping mother's anxious arms
In foreign climes to rove,—the pensive sage,
Heedless of sleep, or midnight's harmful damp,
Hangs o'er the sickly taper,—and untired
The virgin follows, with enchanted step,
The mazes of some wild and wondrous tale
From morn to eve,—unmindful of her form,
Unmindful of the happy dress, that stole
The wishes of the youth, when every maid
With envy pined.—Hence, finally, by night,
The village matron, round the blazing hearth,
Suspends the infant audience with her tales,
Breathing astonishment,—of witching rhymes,
And evil spirits,—of the death-bed call,
To him who robb'd the widow, and devour'd
The orphan's portion,—of unquiet souls
Ris'n from the grave, to ease the heavy guilt

Of deeds in life conceal'd,—of shapes that walk
At dead of night, and clank their chains, and wave
The torch of hell around the murderer's bed.
At every solemn pause, the crowd recoil,
Gazing each other speechless, and congeal'd
With shivering sighs,—till, eager for the event,
Around the beldame, all arrect, they hang,
Each trembling heart with grateful terrors quell'd.*

If man could have been made to know, that his existence depended upon certain *acquisitions of knowledge, without any love of the knowledge* itself,—he *might, perhaps,* have made the acquisition, that was believed to be so important. But to learn,—if there had been no curiosity or pleasure in learning, would then have been *a task;* and, like other *mere tasks,* would probably have been imperfectly executed. Something would have been neglected altogether, or very inaccurately examined, the accurate knowledge of which might have been essential to life itself. Nature, by the constitution which she has given us, has attained the same end, and attained it without leaving to us the possibility of failure. She has given us the *desire* of knowing what it is of importance for us to know; she has made the knowledge *delightful in itself;* she has made it *painful* to us to know *imperfectly.* There is no *task,* therefore, imposed on us. In executing her benevolent will, we have only to gratify one of the strongest

* Pleasures of Imagination, B. I. v. 232—270.

of our passions,—to learn with delight what it is salutary to have learned,—and to derive thus a sort of double happiness from the wisdom which we acquire, and from the very effort by which we acquire it.

LECTURE LXIX.

III. PROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS.—6. DESIRE OF POWER —OF DIRECT POWER, AS IN AMBITION.

GENTLEMEN, after the emotions which I considered in my last Lecture, that which is next, in the order of our arrangement, is the *desire of Power*.

I do not speak, at present, of the desire of mere *freedom from constraint*,—though, where any unjust restraint is actually imposed, the desire of *freedom from it* is, perhaps, the strongest passion which man can feel, and a passion which, in such circumstances, will always be *more ardent* as the *mind is nobler*. While *it* remains, the slave is not *wholly* a slave. His *true degradation* begins, when he has lost, not his liberty merely, but the very *desire of liberty*, and when he has learned to look calmly on himself, as a mere breathing and moving instrument of the wishes of another, to be moved by those wishes more than by his own,—a part of some external pomp necessary to the splendour of some other being, to which he contributes, indeed, but only like the car,

or the sceptre, or the purple robe,—a trapping of adventitious greatness, and one of many decorative trappings that are all equally insignificant in themselves, whether they be living or inanimate. He who can feel this, and feel it without any rising of his heart against the tyranny which would keep him down, or even a wish that he were free, may indeed be considered as scarcely *worthy* of freedom; and if tyranny produced only the evil of such mental degradation, without any of the other evils to which it gives rise directly and indirectly, it would scarcely merit *less* than at present, the detestation of all who know what man is, and is capable of becoming as a freeman, and that wretched thing which he *is*, and must ever *continue to be*, as a slave.

There are minds, indeed, which, long habituated to corruption, can see, in the tyrannical possessor of a power unjustly arrogated, only a source of favour, and of all the partial and prodigal largesses of favour, more easy to be obtained, as requiring, in return, only that profligate subserviency to every vice, which such minds are always sufficiently ready to pay; but what long usage of corruption does it require, before tyranny itself can cease to be hated!

If to a young audience, in those early years when they knew little more of the nature of political institutions, than that under some governments men are *more or less happy*, and *more or less free*, than under others, we were to relate the history of one of those glorious struggles, which the oppressed have sometimes made against their oppressors,—can we doubt, for a moment, to *whom* the sympathy and

eager wishes of the whole audience would be given? While the first band of patriots might perhaps be overthrown, and their leader a fugitive, seeking a temporary shelter, but seeking still more the means of asserting again the same great cause, with the additional motive of avenging the fallen, how eagerly would every heart be *trembling* for him, *hoping* for him, *exulting* as he came forth again with additional numbers, shrinking and half-despairing at each slight repulse in the long-continued combat, but rejoicing and confiding still more at each renewal of the charge, and feeling almost the very triumph of the deliverer himself, when his standard waved at last without any foe to oppose it, and nothing was to be seen upon the field, but those who had perished, and those who were *free*. In listening to such a narrative, even he, who was perhaps in more advanced years to be himself the ready instrument of oppression or corruption, and to smile with derision at the very name of liberty, would feel the *interest* which every other heart was feeling, and would rejoice in the overthrow of despotism, like that of which he was afterwards to be the *willing slave*, or of which he was to be at all times ready to become the slave, *if* the liberties of a nation could be sold by his single voice.

Such is the instant sympathy of our nature, with all who are oppressed. We may cease to feel it, indeed, but many years of sordid selfishness must first have quenched in us every thing which is noble, and made us truly as much *slaves* ourselves, as those whose virtue and happiness are indifferent to us. To be free,—to have the mind of a freeman, is not

to consider liberty as a privilege which a few only are to enjoy, and which, like some narrow and limited good, would become less by distribution,—it is to wish, and to wish ardently, that all partook the blessing. What should we think of any one, who, enjoying the pleasures of vision, and the inestimable instruction which that delightful sense has yielded to him, and continues every moment to yield, could hear, without pity, of a whole nation of the blind? And yet how slight would be the cruelty of such indifference, compared with the guilt of those, who, enjoying themselves the blessings of a liberal system of government, should yet feel a sort of malignant triumph in the *thought* that other nations do not enjoy a liberty like that which they so justly prize,—that there are many millions of human beings, gathered together in tribes which exist still, as their ancestors have for ages existed, in a state of *moral darkness*, compared with which *blindness*, to the mere *sunshine*, is but an evil of little moment!

> "O Liberty, thou goddess, heavenly bright,
> Profuse of bliss, and pregnant with delight,
> Eternal pleasures in thy presence reign,
> And smiling Plenty leads thy wanton train;
> Eased of her load, Subjection grows more light,
> And Poverty looks *cheerful* in thy sight;
> Thou mak'st the gloomy face of Nature gay,
> Giv'st beauty to the sun, and *pleasure* to the day."

The power, however, which consists in mere freedom from constraint, is but a negative power. *That* of which we are at present to consider the *desire*, is

the *positive power* which one individual may exercise over other individuals.

In a former Lecture, in which we considered the *desire* of *action*, we saw the very important advantage of this desire, that prompts man incessantly to rise from the indolence, in which he might otherwise lie torpid. Our desire of power may be considered as in a great measure connected with this general desire of action. We feel a pleasure, of no slight kind, in the consciousness of our mere animal energies, as energies inherent in our nature, and obedient to our will. This pride of exercise is one of the first pleasures which we discover in the infant, whose eye shews visible delight at all the *little wonders* which he is capable of producing himself,—far more than at such as are merely exhibited to him. He is pleased, indeed, when we shake, for the first time, the bells of his little rattle, before we put it into his own hands; but when he has it in his own hands, and makes himself the noise,—which is then such delightful music to his ear,—his rapture is far more than doubled. He repeats it instantly, as if wishing to be quite certain that he is *capable* of executing so marvellous a thing, and the certainty makes his pleasure still greater than before; till, weary of a power of which he can no longer doubt, and stimulated by new objects to new exercises, he again desires something else, and enjoys, and is proud, and again grows weary of the past, to grow afterwards weary of the future. In boyhood, what competitions of this sort—what eagerness to discover how *fast* we

can *run*, how *far* we can *leap!* Every game which then amuses and occupies us, may be considered as a sort of *trial of our strength*, or *agility*, or *skill*,—of some of those qualities, in which *power consists;* and we *run* or *wrestle* with *those* with whom we are perhaps, in combats of a very different kind, to dispute, in other years, the prize of distinction in the various duties and dignities of life.

From what we do immediately *ourselves*, the transition to what we do by *the agency of others*, is a very *natural* and *obvious* one. As we feel the power which we possess in being the *fastest runner*, or the most *skilful wrestler*, we feel also a sort of power in having the instruments best suited to the different games in which we may have to try our skill with the skill of others. In the early exercises and contentions of the play-ground, we are proud of having the best *top*, or the best *bat;* and we look on what *they* do for us as what we do ourselves, since they are ours as much as our own limbs are ours,—a sort of prolongation of the hands that wield them, obeying our will with the same ready ministry as that with which our hands themselves, more directly, move at our bidding. We soon learn to be proud, in like manner, of having the best-trained pointer, or the horse that has trotted with us the greatest number of miles in the shortest time; and when we have once learned to appropriate to ourselves the achievements of these animals, we have very little more to do in appropriating to ourselves whatever is done by others *of our own species*, who have done what they have done, in obedience to us, as truly as the horse

has proceeded in the same line, or turned, or stopped, in obedience to our bridle. Every new being, who obeys us, is thus, as it were, a new *faculty*, or *number* of *faculties*, added to our physical constitution; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that we should desire to extend the number of these adventitious faculties, *more* than that we should avail ourselves of the instruments of the optician for quickening our sight, or of a carriage for conveying us over distances, which it would have been impossible for us to traverse with the same velocity on foot.

Such is the history of our desire of power. It begins with the pleasure of our mere bodily energies, long before we are capable of conceiving the very thought of operating on other beings like ourselves. But the passion, which is at first so easily and so simply gratified, without the mastery or the attempted subjugation of other minds, learns afterwards to consider these minds as almost the only objects on which it is at all important to operate; they are instruments of the great game of human ambition; and in that great game, independent of all patriotic feelings, the passion which is not new, though its objects be new, takes pleasure in playing with the interests of nations, and managing whole subject multitudes, as it before took pleasure in wielding skilfully a racket at tennis, or a mace at the billiard-table,—or, as at a still earlier period, it occupied us with a sort of proud consciousness of command, in running over a field, for the mere pleasure of moving limbs that were scarcely felt by us to be our own, unless when they were in motion.

So universal is the desire of power over the minds of others, that there is, perhaps, no one who is wholly exempt from it. Even affection itself, which is so little in need of any additional charm, derives from it some accession to the delight which it affords. That the absolute dependence of the infant renders still more vivid, even the vivid emotions of parental love, no one, I conceive, can doubt;—and if man, by a different constitution of his nature, could have been born intelligent as in maturer years, —strong enough to be exposed to no peril from without,—and fearless, therefore, not from ignorance of danger, but from superiority to all the causes of injury, by which it was likely for him to be assailed; —though the contemplation of the noble being, to which they had given life, must still have been attended with strong emotions of regard in the bosoms of those, to whom the very excellence contemplated and admired by them, was almost a part of their own existence,—it is not easy to imagine, how very little would, in such circumstances of equality, have remained of that warm tenderness, which, in the present system of alternate feebleness and protection, connects so happily the progressive generations of mankind,—when the first look of love which the parents cast on the helplessness before them, is itself a proof that the unconscious object on which they gaze is to be helpless no more,—that weak as it may still be in itself, it is to be strong and powerful in the vigilant tenderness of their aid.

Such is the influence of the consciousness of a

gentle and benevolent power in the exercise of *parental* love; and is there no influence of this sort, in the exercise of other regards of every species,—no feeling of reciprocal dependence for enjoyment, or rather of reciprocal power of conferring enjoyment,—that sweetens the very enjoyment itself,—making it as delightful to be the source of happiness, as to be the object to whom the happiness ultimately flows? It is sufficiently pleasing, indeed, to love, and to be loved, though these feelings were all which friendship could yield; but there is likewise a pleasure in thinking, that our feelings need only to be *expressed*, to become the feelings, too, of those who, loving us, can scarcely fail to love whatever *we* love. Nor is it to our pleasures of affection only, that this *moral influence* of power extends; it extends, in some measure also, to the delightful consciousness of *all our virtues*. If suffering were to be relieved, it would surely be of very little consequence to the happiness of the world, by whom the relief was given,—if vice were to be made sensible of its guilt, of little consequence from whom the purer views that enlighten it were derived; but, though it would be of the same moment to the *world in general*, it would be very far from being so to *us*. We should delight in the effects, indeed, whoever might have produced them; but our delight would be very different if *ourselves* had been the *instruments*.

The difference, so great in these two cases, is not to be considered as arising *wholly* from the mere self-approbation of our action as virtuous,—for if we

had truly felt the *wish* of extending the same good, and the same resolute willingness to make the personal sacrifices that might be necessary to purchase the extension of it, our *virtue*, as far as our merit or our conscience is concerned, would be the *same*,—not from the pride, that our name would be long remembered,—as connected with the remembrance of an action that had been beneficial to mankind,—though the pleasure of this generous connection of our image, or our name, may mingle, with no slight accession of joy, even in the pure and tranquil retrospects of those who have been unostentatiously good; but, in some degree at least, from the mere feeling of the action as a *work of ours*,—as that which we have had the conscious *power of producing*,—the feeling of the *tie* which connects that happiness of others, at which we rejoice, with our own *mind* as its *cause*, and which, next to the certainty of having done what Heaven itself approves, is, perhaps, the most delightful element in our remembrance of virtue.

It is the same in works of purer intellect. The gravest and most retired philosopher, who scarcely exists out of his library, in giving to the world the result of many years of meditation, delights, indeed, in the truths which he has discovered, and in the advantage which they may, directly or indirectly, afford to some essential interests of society; but though these are the thoughts on which, if his virtue be equal to his wisdom, he may dwell with *greatest* satisfaction, there still comes proudly across his mind,

a feeling of pleasure in the thought of the power which he is exercising, or is soon to exercise, over the minds of others. He is certainly far *more* pleased, that the truths which are to effect the general change of opinion, are truths discovered by *him*, than if exactly *the same beneficial effect* had flowed from discoveries made by any other person; and though the chief part of this pleasure may unquestionably be traced to the love of glory, and the anticipation of the glory which is loved, much of it as unquestionably flows from the internal feeling of the power which he exercises, and which he has the trust of being able to exercise again in similar circumstances,—a power which is more delightful to him, indeed, when accompanied with celebrity, but of which the very secret consciousness is itself a delight that is almost like glory to his mind.

When the orator is employed in some great cause that is worthy of his eloquence,—asserting, against the proud and the powerful, the right of some humble sufferer, who has nothing to vindicate his right but justice and the eloquence of his protector; or rousing a senate, too apt, perhaps, to think only of the privileges of a few, or of the interests, or supposed interests, of *one people*, to the consideration of the great rights of mankind, of every colour and country,—forcing, as it were, upon their *eyes* atrocities which they had, perhaps, at a distance, long sanctioned or *permitted*, and absolving, or at least finishing, by the virtuous triumph of a single hour, the *guilt of many centuries*;—in such cases, indeed,

if the orator, while the happiness and misery, the virtue and vice, the glory and infamy, of nations are depending on his voice, can think within himself of the *power* which he is *exercising*, he would be unworthy at once of the cause which he pleads, and of the eloquence with which he may be pleading it;—but when the victory is won, when all the advantages which are to flow from it have been felt with delight, we may then allow some feeling of additional gratification to arise in the mind, *even of the most virtuous*, at the thought of that energy which was so successfully exercised,—before which every heart, that did not gladly yield to its influence, shrunk as from something dreadful and irresistible, that had swept away all subterfuges of hypocrisy, and left nothing behind but *conviction*, and *joy*, and *dismay*. There are causes in which not to rejoice in the possession of eloquence would be almost to be indifferent to the blessings to which it may lead. The patriot, whom the corrupt tremble to see arise, may well feel a grateful satisfaction in the mighty power which heaven has delegated to him, when he thinks that he has used it only for purposes which heaven approves,—for the freedom, and peace, and prosperity of his own land, and for all that happiness which the land that is dearest to him can diffuse to every nation that is within the sphere of its influence or example.

The power which mind exercises over mind in the cases as yet considered by us, is an intellectual or moral agency, underived from any foreign source,

and wholly personal to the individual who exercises it. But there is a power which is, for the time, far more extensive, and capable of being coveted by minds which are incapable of feeling and appreciating the intellectual or moral excellence. This is the power which high station confers,—the power of *forcing obedience even upon the reluctant*, and, in many cases, of *winning* obedience, from that blind respect which the multitude are always sufficiently disposed to feel for the follies, as for the virtues, of those above them. Much of the pleasure attached to the conception of this power, like that which attends every other species of power, arises, it must be admitted, from the glory which is supposed to attend the possession of official dignities; but the desire of the *power itself* would be one of the strongest of the passions of men, though this *mere power* were all which station conferred. To know that there are a number of beings, endowed with many energies, which Nature seemed to have made absolutely independent of us, who are constantly ready to do whatever we may order them to do, in obedience to our very caprice,—is to us, as I have already said, very nearly the same thing, as if some extension of our faculties had been given to us, by the addition of all *their* powers to our physical constitution. If these instruments of power were mere machines,—which subserviency to us could not in any degree debase, and which could be *kept in order* without any great anxiety on our part, and without occupying that room which the living instruments occupy, we should

all, probably, feel the desire of possessing these *subsidiary faculties*, since not to wish for some of them at least, would be like indifference whether we had two arms or only one, distinct or indistinct vision, a good or bad memory. We are not, with respect to any of our faculties, like that marvellous runner in the fairy tale, who was so *very nimble* as to be obliged to tie his legs *that he might not run too fast.* Our powers, bodily or mental, never seem to us to require any such voluntary retardation; and, however well fitted they may be for the circumstances in which we are placed, we are yet desirous of being able to do more than, as individuals, we are capable of doing, and would gladly, therefore, avail ourselves of the supplemental machinery, or of such parts of it as would suit best our particular wishes and purposes. But the parts of the machinery of Power are living beings like ourselves; and fond as we are of the purposes which we may be desirous of executing by means of them, we have, if we be virtuous, moral affections that preclude the wish. With these moral affections for the liberty and happiness of others, we so much prefer their freedom to our personal conveniencies that we never encroach on it. We do not covet so much the pride of him who sees a whole multitude busy only in furthering his frivolous and ever-changing desires, as the serenity of him whom the world counts far humbler, who sees around him a multitude happy in their own domestic occupations, feeling for him only that friendship which the heart spontaneously offers, and assisting

him only with those social services which it is delightful to give, and which, as given with delight, it is delightful also to receive.

When I say, that a virtuous lover of mankind would desire this latter happiness more than the other, I know well, that there are many minds of which I must not consider myself as expressing the choice;—minds which value the *power* merely *as power*; which feel it, therefore, with *more pleasure* the *more servile* the multitude of their dependents may be; and which, in their endeavours to rise above the crowd, see no slavery too *mean* for themselves to endure, if they can purchase, by their own voluntary degradation, the pleasure of commanding.

He who feels within himself the talents which must render his exaltation eminently useful to mankind, and who wishes for power, that there may be more virtue and more happiness in the world, than if he had not been elevated, would, indeed, be guilty of criminal self-indulgence, if he were to resign himself to the enjoyments of private life, and to neglect the honourable means of rising to a station which his virtues and talents would render truly honourable. To such a mind, however, ambition presents no anxieties; because, though there may not be the happiness of attaining a more useful station, there is still the happiness of being useful in the station already possessed; and it presents no disgrace, even in failure, because the disgrace which the heart feels, is only for those who have failed in dishonourable wishes, or who have sought what is honourable in itself by the use of dishonourable means.

But, of the multitude of the ambitious, how few are there of this noble class;—how infinitely more numerous they who seek in power only what the virtuous man does not wish so much, as consent to bear in it for the greater good which may attend it! How many, who labour, perhaps, through a long life of ignominy, to be a little more guilty than it is possible for them to be with the narrow means of guilt which they possess, and who die at last without attaining that wretched object for which they have crawled and prostrated themselves, and been everything which a virtuous man would not be, even for a single moment, for all which kings, or the favourites of kings, could offer! If they fail in their ignoble ambition, it is easy to see what misery they have earned; and if even they succeed at last, what is it which they gain? There is no pleasure in what they possess, while it is inferior to something which they wish, with a still more ardent appetite to acquire. "The passion which torments them," as Seneca says, "is like a flame which burns with more violence the *more fuel there may have previously been added* to the *conflagration*."—"Eo majora cupimus, quo majora venerunt:—ut flammæ infinito acrior vis est, quo ex majore incendio emicuit. Æque ambitio non patitur quenquam in eâ mensurâ honorum conquiescere, quæ quondam ejus fuit impudens votum. Nemo agit de tribunatû gratias, sed queritur quod non est ad prætúram usque perductus. Nec hæc grata est, si deest consulatus; ne hic quidem satiat, si unus est. Ultra se cupiditas porrigit, et felicitatem suam

non intelligit, quia non *unde venerit* respicit, sed *quo tendat*." * The happiness enjoyed by one who has risen to power by ignoble means, is perhaps less than that of the most abject of those who depend on him,—and the dignity which he has attained, and knows not how to enjoy, however splendid it may be as a mark of distinction, is, in this very distinction, a mark of nothing so much as of the unworthiness of him who possesses it, a memorial of crimes or follies, which, in another situation, would have been unnoticed or forgotten,—but which are now *forced* on the continued execration or contempt of mankind; and in the consciousness or dread of this general feeling, are forced, too, more frequently than they would otherwise have arisen, on the shame and remorse of him who feels, that in purchasing with them every thing else, he has not purchased with them happiness.

In the great scale of power, which ascends from the lowest of the people to the sovereign, to whom all are submitted, in which the inferior, at every stage, is paying court to his superior, and receiving it, in his turn, from those who are inferior to himself, it is not easy to say at what point of the scale the pleasure of the homage is most sincerely felt. There is much truth in one of Fielding's lively pictures of this sort of homage, in which he reduces the difference of power to the different *hours of the day*, at which we *are great men*. "With regard to time, it may not be unpleasant," he says, "to survey the

* De Beneficiis, Lib. II. c. 27.

picture of dependence like a kind of ladder. As for instance, early in the morning arises the postillion, or some other boy, which great families, no more than great ships, are without, and falls to brushing the clothes, and cleaning the shoes of John the footman, who, being drest himself, applies his hands to the same labours for Mr Secondhand, the squire's gentleman;—the gentleman, in the like manner, a little later in the day, attends the squire;—the squire is no sooner equipt, than he attends the levee of my lord, which is no sooner over, than my lord himself is seen at the levee of the favourite, who, after the hour of homage is at an end, appears himself to pay homage to the levee of his sovereign. Nor is there, perhaps, in this whole ladder of dependence, any one step at a greater distance from the other, than the first from the second; so that to a philosopher, the question might only seem, whether you would chuse to be a *great man* at *six in the morning*, or at *two in the afternoon*."

That there is more true happiness in the enjoyments of private life, than in the pursuits of ambition, is one of those common-places of morality, which the experience of every day confirms; but which, as that very experience shews, have little effect in overcoming the passion itself,—and which are thus ineffectual, because the passion does not relate only to the particular purposes of the individual, but is placed in our bosom for purposes of general advantage, which we are to execute, perhaps, without knowing that we are promoting any ends, but those of our own selfish desire.

"The poor man's son," says Dr Smith, in one of the most eloquent passages of his very eloquent work,—"the poor man's son, whom Heaven, in its anger, has visited with ambition, when he begins to look around him, admires the condition of the rich. He finds the cottage of his father too small for his accommodation, and fancies he should be lodged more at his ease in a palace. He is displeased with being obliged to walk afoot, or to endure the fatigue of riding on horseback. He sees his superiors carried about in machines, and imagines that in one of these he could travel with less inconveniency. He feels himself naturally indolent, and willing to serve himself with his own hands as little as possible; and judges that a numerous retinue of servants would save him from a great deal of trouble. He thinks if he had attained all these, he would sit still contentedly, and be quiet, enjoying himself in the thought of the happiness and tranquillity of his situation. He is enchanted with the distant idea of this felicity. It appears in his fancy, like the life of some superior rank of beings; and in order to arrive at it, he devotes himself for ever to the pursuit of wealth and greatness. To obtain the conveniences which these afford, he submits, in the first year, nay, in the first month of his application, to more fatigue of body, and more uneasiness of mind, than he could have suffered through the whole of his life from the want of them. He studies to distinguish himself in some laborious profession. With the most unrelenting industry he labours night and

day to acquire talents superior to all his competitors. He endeavours next to bring those talents into public view; and, with equal assiduity, solicits every opportunity of employment. For this purpose he makes his court to all mankind; he serves those whom he hates, and is obsequious to those whom he despises. Through the whole of his life, he pursues the idea of a certain artificial and elegant repose, which he may never arrive at; for which he sacrifices a real tranquillity, that is at all times in his power, and which,—if, in the extremity of old age, he should at last attain to it,—he will find to be in no respect preferable to that humble security and contentment, which he had abandoned for it. It is *then*, in the last dregs of life, his body wasted with toil and diseases, his mind galled and ruffled by the memory of a thousand injuries and disappointments, which he imagines he has met with from the injustice of his enemies, or from the perfidy and ingratitude of his friends, that he begins at last to find, that wealth and greatness are mere trinkets of frivolous utility, no more adapted for procuring ease of body or tranquillity of mind, than the tweezer-cases of the lover of toys; and like them too, more troublesome to the person who carries them about with him, than all the advantages they can afford him are commodious. —To one who was to live alone in a desolate island, it might be a matter of doubt, perhaps, whether a palace, or a collection of such small conveniences as are commonly contained in a tweezer-case, would contribute most to his happiness and enjoyment. If he is to live in society, indeed, there can be no compari-

son, because in this, as in all other cases, we constantly pay more regard to the sentiments of the spectator, than to those of the person principally concerned, and consider rather how his situation will appear to other people, than how it will appear to himself. But in the languor of disease, and the weariness of old age, the pleasures of the vain and empty distinctions of greatness disappear. To one in this situation, they are no longer capable of recommending those toilsome pursuits in which they had formerly engaged him. In his heart he curses ambition, and vainly regrets the ease and the indolence of youth, pleasures which are fled for ever, and which he has foolishly sacrificed, for what, when he has got it, can afford him no real satisfaction. Power and riches appear then to be what they are, enormous and operose machines, contrived to produce a few trifling conveniences to the body,—consisting of springs the most nice and delicate, which must be kept in order with the most anxious attention, and which, in spite of all our care, are ready every moment to burst into pieces, and to crush in their ruins their unfortunate possessor. They are immense fabrics, which it requires the labour of a life to raise, which threaten every moment to overwhelm the person that dwells in them, and which, while they stand, though they may save him from some smaller inconveniencies, can protect him from none of the severer inclemencies of the season. They keep off the summer shower, not the winter storm, but leave him always as much, and sometimes more exposed than before, to anxiety, to

fear, and to sorrow, to diseases, to danger, and to death." *

Such is the madness of ambition in the individual himself. But it is not of a single member of the social multitude, it is of the great interests of mankind that we should think; and in relation to these, what admirable general purposes does this very madness promote! The labour to which the individual submits without profit, is not *profitless to the community*. In far the greater number of instances, he is promoting their advantage, careless as he may *seem*, and careless as he truly *is* of it. In thinking of ambition, as it may thus operate in its relation to mankind, the moralist is too apt to dwell on the great and visible desolations to which in a few striking cases it gives rise,—when the ambitious man has the power of leading armies and forcing nations to be slaves, and of achieving all that iniquity which the audacious heart of man may have had the guilt and folly of considering as greatness. We forget or neglect, merely because they are less striking than those rare evils, the immediate beneficial influence which the passion is constantly exercising in the conduct of the humbler individuals, whose power, under the preventive guardianship of laws, is limited to actions that scarcely can fail to be of service to the community. All the works of human industry are, in a great measure, referable to an ambition of some sort; that, however humble it may seem to minds of prouder views, is yet relatively as strong as the am-

* Theory of Moral Sentiments, Part IV. c. 1.

bition of the proudest. We toil, that we may have some little influence, or some little distinction, however small the number of our inferiors may be; and the toils which raise to the petty distinction, are toils of public, though humble, utility;—and even the means of distinction which the opulent possess, are chiefly in the support of those, who, but for the pride which supports them, while it seems only to impose on them the labour of ministering to all the various wants of their luxury, would have little to hope from a charity that might not be easy to be excited by the appearance of mere suffering, in those slight and ordinary degrees in which it makes its appeal rather to the heart than to the senses. It is this silent influence of the passion, contributing to general happiness, where general happiness is not even an object of thought, which it is most delightful to trace; and it is an influence which is felt in every place, at every moment, while the ravages of political ambition, desolating as they may be in their tempestuous violence, pass away, and give place to a prosperity like that which they seemed wholly to overwhelm,—a prosperity which, as the result of innumerable labours, and, therefore, of innumerable wishes that have prompted these labours, rises again, and continues through a long period of years, by the gentler influence of those very principles to which before it owed its destruction.

But while we perceive with gladness the happy social uses to which nature has made the passion for power in mankind instrumental,—or rather, to speak with more accuracy, the uses *for which* nature has

made us susceptible of this passion,—and while we know well, that the world, therefore, never can be without those who will be moved by ambition to seek the honours and dignities which it is necessary for the happiness of the world that some should seek, it is pleasing for those whose fortune or whose wishes lead them to more tranquil and happier, though less envied occupations,—to think, that the happiness which so many are seeking, is not confined by nature to the dignities which so very few only are capable of attaining,—that it is as wide as the situations of men,—and that, while no rank is too high for the enjoyment of virtue, there is no rank that can be regarded as too low for it. It has been as *truly* as eloquently said, that "when Providence divided the earth among a few lordly masters, it neither forgot nor abandoned those who seemed to have been left out in the partition. These last, too, enjoy their share of all that it produces. In what constitutes the real happiness of human life, they are in no respect inferior to those who would seem so much above them. In ease of body and peace of mind, all the different ranks of life are nearly upon a level; and the beggar, who suns himself by the side of the highway, possesses that security which kings are fighting for."

LECTURE LXIX.

III. PROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS—6. DESIRE OF POWER—OF INDIRECT POWER, AS IN AVARICE.

GENTLEMEN, after the remarks which I made in my last Lecture on *power*, as an *immediate object of desire*, we are naturally led to consider that peculiar and very interesting modification of the desire of power, in which the object seems to be less the *direct command itself*, than the *means* by which the command may *indirectly* be exercised. Such is that form of *ambition* which is commonly denominated *avarice*.

By the *affections* which we excite,—by our *talents*, whether of pure *reason* or of *eloquence*,—by the *authority of public station*, we exercise, as you have seen, a ready dominion over the minds of others. We obtain a command over them, which, though less direct, is not less powerful, by the possession of those things which they are desirous of possessing, and for which, accordingly, they are ready to dispose of their *personal services*, or to transfer to us some

of those means of enjoyment which they possess, and of which we, in our turn, are desirous. To *have* what all men wish to have, with the *power* of *transferring* it to them, is to have a dominion over every thing which they can transfer to us, equal to the extent of the wishes on their part.

Of the power of gratifying these wishes, wealth is the universal *representative*, or rather the universal *instrument*. To possess it, is to exercise a sway less obvious indeed, but, in its extent, far more imperial than that which ever rewarded or punished the successful arms of the most illustrious conqueror,—a sway as universal as the wishes of mankind,—a sway, too, which is exercised in every case without compulsion, and even with an eagerness, on the part of *him who obeys*, equal to that which is felt by *him who is obeyed*.

What conqueror is there, who has not seen, beyond the march of his armies, some stubborn tribe that resisted still the force which had crushed whole nations in its dreadful career;—beyond which, if *they* too had been crushed, some *other* tribe *as stubborn* would still have risen, to remind the victor of his *weakness*, even at the very moment in which his sway was stretched over a wider space than had ever been covered with slavery and misery before by a single individual? The empire which a rich man exercises finds no nation or tribe that wishes to resist it. It commands the services of man wherever man can be reached, because it offers to the *desires* of man the power of acquiring whatever objects of external enjoyment he is most eager to acquire.

From the north to the south, from the east to the west, every thing that can be rendered *active* is put in motion by him, who remains tranquilly at home exciting the industry of those of whose very existence he is ignorant, and receiving the products of labour for his own use, without knowing from whom he receives them. It is almost as in the magic stories of romance, in which the hero is represented as led from the castle-gate by hands that are invisible to him,—ushered to a splendid banquet, where no one seems present,—where wine is poured into the goblet before him at his very wish, and luxurious refreshment after refreshment appears upon the board, but appears as if no hand had brought it. To the *rich man*, in like manner, whatever he wishes seems to come merely because he wishes it to come. Without knowing who they are who are contributing to his idle luxury, he receives the gratification itself, and receives it from hands that operate as invisibly as the fairy hands at the banquet. He gathers around him the products of every sea and every soil. The sunshine of one climate, the snows of another, are made subsidiary to his artificial wants; and though it is impossible to discern the particular arms which he is every instant setting in motion, or the particular efforts of inventive thought which he is every instant stimulating, there can be no doubt that such a relation truly exists, which connects with his wishes, and with his power, the industry of those who labour on the remotest corner of the earth, which the enterprizing commerce of man can reach.

Since the possession of wealth is thus the possession of indirect power over the labour of millions, it is not wonderful that our desire of every gratification, which the labour of millions can afford, should be attended with the desire of that, by which the labour that is to minister to our gratification can be commanded. When viewed in this light, the desire of wealth is only another form of *those very desires*, to which wealth can be rendered instrumental, by affording them the means of indulgence.

But the passion assumes a very different appearance, when it seems confined to the *means* of exercising an indirect command over the labours of others, without the slightest intention of *exercising* that sway,—certainly without the least *attempt* to exercise it. If he, who was most desirous of wealth, were most desirous of obtaining with it those enjoyments, in relation to which alone, wealth has any value, there would be no mystery in avarice; and we should scarcely think of giving it a name, as a separate passion, distinct from the passions to which it was subsequent, and of which it was only representative. But it happens, that, though prodigality may, in all cases, or nearly in all cases, be considered as *connected with avarice*, avarice very often exists, and is characterized *as avarice* only *when* it exists, without any disposition to employ, for purposes of enjoyment, what it is so eager to acquire. The mere gold is valued, as if it were a source of every happiness, when every happiness which it truly affords, and without relation to which it is nothing, is

despised, as if of little value, compared with that, which derives from its power over the very enjoyments that are despised, all the absolute value which it possesses.

The anchoret, who, to render himself more acceptable to God, retires from the society and service of man,—who sleeps upon the earth,—who wraps his feeble limbs in the coarsest garments,—who lives on roots and water,—and sees his meagre frame waste every day, without a wish to restore its vigour by a diet of richer nourishment,—is one whose superstitious weakness we may lament, while we respect the very error from which it flows. But what should we think of him, if, while he slept upon the earth, and covered himself with sackcloth, and scarcely tasted even his scanty food, he were desirous of amassing the means of acquiring the softest couches, the most splendid robes, the richest fare, the most magnificent palaces? Even this inconsistency is not all which the world exhibits. There are human beings, anchorets of a more ignoble order, who submit voluntarily to all these privations, and who feel at the same time this very desire of wealth, which such privations render absolutely superfluous,—who have the still greater inconsistency of desiring to possess means of luxurious enjoyment, while they already have these means in their possession,—who sleep on the earth, not because they think that God has prohibited every sensual indulgence, but because they fear that their couches, if they were to lie upon them, would be sooner worn out,—who clothe them-

selves in rags, not from humility, but from pride, that trembles lest it should afterwards have to appear in rags,—and who, in the midst of inexhaustible abundance, starve, because they do not know how soon, if a thousand improbable things should happen, they may afterwards be obliged to starve.

Poverty, it has been said, has *many* wants,—but avarice is in want of every thing.

"Desunt inopiæ multa, avaritiæ omnia."

"The wealth which the miser calls his own," says Cyprian, "he guards in his coffers with the same anxiety of watchfulness, as if it were the money of another committed to his charge; he has no other possession of it, than as *hindering others to possess it.*"—"Pecuniam *suam* dicunt, quam, velut alienam, domi clausam, sollicito labore custodiunt. Possident ad hoc tantum, ne possidere alteri liceat."

The picture which Pope gives us of a celebrated miser, in one of his Moral Essays, absurd, and almost inconsistent with human reason as the character may seem to be, is yet a picture of no small number of mankind; and when the character, in all its deformity, is not to be traced, there are still some features of it that present themselves to the observer, in many individuals who are misers only *in certain circumstances*, or at *certain moments*, and who would be astonished, if we were to attach to them so disgraceful a name.

After describing the miserable flock-bed, in the worst inn's worst room, in which the Duke of Buck-

ingham, once that "life of pleasure, and that soul of whim," closed his wretched existence, the poet continues,—

"His Grace's fate, sage Cutler could foresee;
And well, he thought, advised him, 'Live like me.'—
As well his Grace replied, 'Like you, Sir John!
That I can do when all I have is gone.'
Resolve me, Reason, which of these is worse,
Want with a *full*, or with an *empty* purse?
Thy *life* more *wretched*, Cutler, was confess'd,—
Arise and tell me, was thy *death* more bless'd?
Cutler saw tenants break, and houses fall,
For very want—he could not build a wall.
His only daughter in a stranger's power,
For very want,—he could not pay a dower.
A few grey hairs his reverend temples crown'd;
'Twas *very want* that sold them for two pound.
What even denied a cordial at his end,
Banish'd the doctor, and expell'd the friend?
What, but a want,—which you, perhaps, think *mad*,
Yet *thousands* feel,—the *want* of what he *had*."

I have already said, that, if avarice consisted merely in the desire of obtaining the wealth by which we might command the gratification of our direct desires, there would be nothing in it at all mysterious, since it would be only another form of *these very desires*; and that the *mystery* of this strange passion arises only when the *enjoyments* which it could command are sacrificed to the mere possession of the *means of commanding them*. It then, indeed, presents phenomena truly worthy of being analysed, not

* Pope's Moral Essays, Ep. III. v. 315—332.

merely as striking in themselves, but as illustrative of some of the most important general principles of our mental constitution.

It is, in the first place, sufficiently evident, that the *avarice* does not arise from any *essential quality* of the *wealth* itself as a mere substance. You cannot suppose, that, independent of the relative value which the comparative scarcity of these two metals has produced, a mass of gold would be much more *desirable* than a mass of iron. It must originally, then, in the eyes of the miser, as of every other person, have derived its high value from the command over the labour of others, or the actual possessions of others, which it was capable of transferring to every one into whose hands it might pass, or from the distinction which the possession of what is *rare* and universally desired always confers.

The common theory of the value attached by the miser to the mere symbol of enjoyment, is, that the *symbol*, by the influence of the general laws of association, becomes representative of the enjoyment itself. We have so frequently considered money as that which affords us various pleasures, that the value which we attach to the pleasures themselves, is *transferred* to that which we know will always produce them when exchanged for the enjoyment; and there can be no question, that such an association *does* truly take place, and *must* take place, though not in a few individuals only, but in all mankind, as long as this well-known principle of the general mental constitution continues to operate. But still it must be remembered, that the mystery in this case remains very nearly the same as before. The theory

accounts, indeed, and accounts most satisfactorily, for a value beyond its intrinsic use, which the miser, *like every one else*, may attach to gold; but it does not explain the *peculiar* associations in his mind, which form the very difficulty in question, that *very high value* which he alone discovers in it,—a value so far surpassing that of the quantity of enjoyment which it may command, that the miser seldom thinks of *spending*, that is to say, of exchanging the mere symbol of enjoyment for the enjoyment itself, while he thinks, with insatiable avidity, of *accumulating* what is *not to be spent*. The common theory, therefore, is manifestly defective. Let us inquire, then, whether a nicer analysis may not afford us a solution.

No one, I conceive, originally, and without regard to its value in exchange, could prize a piece of gold much more than an equal bulk of any thing else that had physical properties of equal direct utility; and originally, too, I conceive, from the indisputable influence of time in *all* our desires, that, if all other circumstances were the same, no one would prefer to a *present* pleasure, a pleasure of *exactly* the *same intensity and duration* at any distant period. For both these reasons, *avarice*, as it exists in maturer life, could not be an immediate passion, but must have required certain circumstances to *produce* or *foster* it.

The circumstances which I conceive to have most effect in heightening the value of the symbol or instrument of enjoyment above the enjoyment itself, is the comparative *permanence* of the one, and the

very *fugitive nature* of the other. Before the boy lays out his penny in the purchase of an apple or orange, it appears to him valuable chiefly as the mode of obtaining the apple or orange. But the fruit, agreeable as it may have been while it lasted, is *soon devoured*,—its value, with respect to him, has wholly ceased,—and the penny, he knows, is still in existence, and would have been still *his own*, if the fruit had *not* been purchased. He thinks of the penny, therefore, as *existing now*, and existing without anything which he can oppose to it as equivalent; and the feeling of *regret* arises,—the wish, that he had *not* made the purchase, and that the penny, as still existing, and equally capable as before of procuring some new enjoyment, had continued in his pocket. The feeling of regret, thus associated with the loss of his penny, will, by frequent repetition, be still more intimately combined with the very conception of those little purchases to which his appetites otherwise might lead him. It will seem a serious evil to part with that, the pain of having parted with which was a serious evil before. The regret of course must vary with the mode in which the boy has most frequently laid out the contents of his little purse, so as to present, or not to present to his mind the equivalent enjoyment for which the power of obtaining afterwards a similar amount of *enjoyment* was resigned. If he has purchased anything which retains a permanent value, the regret will be less likely to arise, while the pleasure received from the purchase, as frequently presented to his mind during the permanent possession,

will, on the contrary, accustom him to value money, only as the instrument of obtaining what he feels to be so valuable. It will be the same if he have given it away for the relief of distress, since in this case, though nothing absolutely permanent is possessed by him, the pleasure of the *thought itself*, as often as the thought recurs, may almost be considered as something *permanent*. It is impossible for him to think of his penny without thinking of *this also*, not as a pleasure wholly *past*, like that of fruit or sweetmeats devoured, but as a pleasure still present and never fading, and accompanied therefore with a feeling of satisfaction, which precludes all regret. Our first expences, then, like all the subsequent expences of our maturer years, may be attended, according to circumstances, either with regret or satisfaction; and it is not easy to say, how much of the *future avarice* of the *man* may depend on the nature of a few purchases made by the *boy*, according as these may have been of a kind to give greater or less occasion to the feeling of regret, and to the subsequent association of this feeling with the very notion of any little expence.

I may remark, by the way, the very early connection which, in this manner, takes place between *prodigality* and *avarice*,—a connection which continues to subsist, as I have already said, almost universally in maturer life.

But,—to return to our little miser,—it must not be supposed, that the *regret* which is early associated with *expence*, approaches the nature of that *extreme fear of parting with money* which constitutes

the avarice of *manhood.* All that is necessary, is to produce a slight terror of expence, which the habits of many years may strengthen into *parsimony.* In the boy, it may be scarcely more than what is counted only frugality in a man, and ranked among the virtues; but a *boy* that is *frugal,* as *man is frugal,* is a *miser of other years.*

When the feeling of regret has been frequently blended, in a very lively manner, with the conception of expence, it is, of course, readily *suggested again* in *similar circumstances.* In *every* purchase there must be something given away, as well as something received; and, according as the mind is led more to the *one* or to the *other* of these, it will be more or less ready to make the exchange. If its thought have turned chiefly to the agreeable object which it wishes to acquire,—as, where the object is very pleasing, it will naturally do, unless counteracted by opposite suggestions,—it will gladly make the purchase; but if, when any such wish arises, its thought be turned, in consequence of former feelings of regret, chiefly to that which it must *give* to obtain the object,—and if the principal reflection be, "How many other things as valuable, or more valuable, could this money procure; and what regret, therefore, shall I afterwards feel, if I have parted with it for this one,"—the very desire of making the purchase may cease altogether, from the mere suggestion of the various other agreeable objects, the acquisition of which the purchase of this one would preclude. The frequent repetition of this deliberate

rejection will, of course, connect more and more with the very *feeling of deliberation*, as to any little expence, that feeling of *rejection* which was its former attendant.

I may remark, in the next place, that if a guinea were significant only of *one species of enjoyment*, to the same amount which it might procure in exchange, its value would not be felt in so lively a manner, even by the most avaricious. But it recals to the mind, not one species of enjoyment merely which it might command, but as *many* species as there are objects to be purchased with it. The longer we dwell on it, therefore, *the more valuable does it seem*, because it suggests *more* of these *equivalents*, all of which it seems, in its power of commanding them, to condense within itself. Accordingly, to the miser, who is accustomed to this contemplation, a guinea is almost like a thousand; and it is not very wonderful, therefore, that any *single object* which a guinea could purchase should seem to him trifling, when compared with the precious coin itself, which is felt as the equivalent of *many*.

In a former Lecture, when treating of the influence of habit, in endearing to us, with a value far beyond its intrinsic use, the most trifling object that has been long familiar to us, I endeavoured to account for this, in a great measure, by the number of past enjoyments that were *condensed as it were* in our very notion of the object,—the loss of which, accordingly, seemed to us, by a sort of momentary illusion, to be not the loss of the trifling object alone,

but the loss of those more important delights, that gave it an imaginary value which it was impossible for us to separate from it. To part with it is, in a great measure, to part with all the pleasures that seem contained in its very nature, or of which, at least, it is representative to our thought. An illusion of the same kind, I conceive, operates very powerfully on the miser. He has so often meditated on the *worth of a guinea*, in its relation to different objects, that it appears to him not a mere piece of gold, nor the representative only of one small amount of enjoyment, but the power of obtaining almost innumerable things; and the very conception of the *loss* of it is, therefore, like the loss, not of one of those things only, but of every thing which it might have procured. It is as if he were giving away a treasure; because it represents to his mind, in the conception of its various equivalents, as many things as a treasure would be necessary for purchasing.

There is another circumstance, which I consider as having great weight with the miser;—though, when first stated, it may seem to you, perhaps, to imply an absurdity too great even for momentary illusion,—for the momentary illusion even of a mind subject to so much illusion as that of the miser must certainly be allowed to be, whatever theory we may form of its feelings. To the avaricious, there are *two thoughts*, which may be regarded as almost constantly present,—the thought of what they *possess*, and the thought of some *enormous sum*, to which, perhaps, they look as to the ultimate object of their

sordid ambition. Every petty gain is no sooner made, than it is instantly added to the sum already possessed, and the new amount repeatedly measured with the greater sum that is only hoped. It is valued *not for itself only*, but as a *part* of these far greater products. The loss of the small sum, therefore, however insignificant in itself, is not the loss of it only, but is felt as if it were the loss of much more. It is as if the one hundred thousand pounds, or the half million, which it was before so delightful to contemplate, could no longer be contemplated with the same satisfaction,—as if *it*, the splendid *whole*, had almost ceased to exist, by the loss of that which was one of its constituent parts. The illusion is but a momentary one indeed, yet still it recurs as often as the loss itself becomes an object of thought; and a single guinea is thus regretted, almost with the same anguish of heart, as if the loss of it had been actual poverty, because it is truly a part, and considered chiefly as a part, of *that* great whole, the loss of which *would*, without all question, *be* actual poverty.

It is in this way, I conceive, that the miser, when the avarice is extreme, seriously trembles at approaching poverty, when he is forced to be at the slightest expence. It is quite evident, that he *could not* seriously believe this, if he discerned clearly the insignificant proportion which the expence bore to his actual wealth. But it is a *part of the whole*—it is intimately associated with the conception of *the whole* —and the loss of it, therefore, being *inconsistent*

with the *possession of the whole*, seems for the moment to take that *whole* from him. He thinks, with a sort of giddy terror, that he is falling into poverty, firm as his golden support may be,—very nearly in the same way as one that stands on the brink of a precipice with the firmest footing, still feels every moment, in the vivid conception of the possible fall, as if he were truly tumbling down the dreadful abyss. If a small parapet had been between him and the precipice, it could not have made his footing more firm, but it would have prevented the agony of giddy terror; if the few guineas, in like manner, had not been lost, the miser scarcely could be said to be *richer* than *after the loss*, but the *conception* of *poverty* would not have been excited, that *conception* which rises to the mind with such increased reality when there is any *real loss*, however *trifling*, with the notion of which the *imaginary* loss of the *whole actual wealth* admits of being blended.

Whatever truth there may be in this speculation, as to the momentary illusion by which the loss of a *part*, in consequence of the habit of frequently dwelling on it *as* a *part* of a *great whole*, becomes, for the moment, like the *loss of that great whole itself*—an illusion which seems to me to arise very naturally from the common principles of the mind, as exemplified in many other analogous feelings—and without which, or some similar illusion, it appears to me impossible to account for all the phenomena of extreme avarice—still, whether this speculation be admitted

or rejected, the remarks as to the influence of *regret*, in producing associations favourable to the production and growth of avarice, will not be the less just. While the laws of suggestion in the mind continue as at present, it is impossible that the feeling of *regret* should attend many little purchases which the child may have made, *without* some feeling of uneasiness in the similar purchases which he may be led to make again,—an uneasiness, which those who know the growth of feelings in the mind from very small beginnings, will not be surprised to see afterwards expanded into all the anxieties, and horrors, and madness of avarice.

The chief circumstance of distinction, then, of the theory which I have ventured to propose to you, from the evident inadequacy of the common theory, is, that instead of making the passion of the miser to depend on the pleasing association of enjoyment, it founds it chiefly on an association of an opposite kind—of the *painful feeling of regret*. The remembrances which rise to his mind, are not so much those of the few moments of some agreeable purchase, as of the more lasting wish, that the purchase had not been made. It is not happiness, then, in its shadowy form, which is for ever playing around his heart, even when he contemplates the very symbols of happiness. It is possible *pain*, not possible *pleasure*—*fear*, far more than hope,—*poverty* itself, with all the wretched images of the wants that attend it, in the very redundancy of a wealth which it would weary every one but its never-weary possessor and calculator to compute.

This theory of avarice, as founded on suggestions of regret and not of pleasure, explains very readily some facts, which otherwise, I cannot but think, would be absolutely inexplicable. Nothing is more truly remarkable, for example, than the disproportioned vexation of the miser at losses of very different amount. The loss of a guinea, or even of a shilling, gives him frequently the same uneasiness as the loss of a thousand guineas; and he who would not give away a guinea without the most compunctious terror, has sometimes been known to give away one thousand, perhaps with less difficulty, certainly with less appearance of anxiety, than if it had been a much smaller sum. The reason of this apparent disproportion I conceive to be, that the feeling of *regret*, which I regard as the predominant feeling in the complex associations of the miser, has been more frequently attached to the loss of a *smaller* sum, such as that which is given away in common purchases, and arises, therefore, more readily to the mind, merely because it has been thus more frequently associated. A guinea has been regretted a thousand times—a thousand guineas have, perhaps, never once been regretted, because they have never been given away before. A large sum may, indeed, be analysed into its constituent parts, with the conception of the loss of which the painful regret might be supposed to arise as before; but this analytic reduction requires an operation of thought, which takes place less readily than the simple suggestion of feelings, attached by frequent recurrence to the petty loss it-

self. So much of avarice, at least of what appears most ridiculous and sordid in avarice, consists in the pitiful saving of a few shillings of those small sums which occur to the demand of every hour, and admit, therefore, of being most frequently combined with regret in some stronger or slighter degree, that it has been said, with great truth, that a very few pounds in the year, laid out as other people would lay them out, would save almost any one from being counted a miser.

It is for the same reason, I may remark, that it is very difficult for those, who, in early youth, have struggled with *extreme penury*, and who have been suddenly raised to affluence, not to have at their heart what may seem like original constitutional avarice to those who do not reflect on its cause,—a love of money, when the love of money seems so little necessary to them,—a terror of expence, which was once only economy, but which is economy no more. They carry with them the feelings that have attended their expenses, in a situation in which any little gain was of great relative value, and any little departure from extreme frugality would have been ruin; and hence, perhaps, with every desire of doing good, when they think of their large fortune, and of the means of bounty which it affords them, they do little good in detail, because, in their actual benefactions, the feelings which they have been accustomed to attach to sums that were once great to them, continue still, by the influence of mere association, to arise, when the sums which they tremble to give

away are, in relation to their ample means, truly insignificant. A few guineas in their charities as in their expenses of every sort, seem to them a large sum, because they seemed to them a large sum, for the greater part, perhaps, of a long life. They are misers merely because they once were poor, not because they are indifferent to distress.

When, in such circumstances of sudden change of fortune, the heart readily adapts itself to the change, it may be considered as a proof, that he who is now rich, has, even in indigence, been accustomed to look to wealth chiefly as an instrument of gratifying those generous wishes which he now, therefore, delights to gratify,—unrestrained in his bounty by any feeling of regret, because the chief regret which he felt before, was that of not being able to bestow a relief, the power of bestowing which he now feels to be so inestimable a part of riches.

In these remarks on the growth of avarice, I have considered chiefly that part of the process which is the *least obvious*. There is one more obvious circumstance, which is, of course, not to be neglected in the theory of this passion,—the *distinction* which great wealth confers, like everything which is possessed only by a few, and which all, or nearly all, are desirous of possessing. Of the influence of this mere distinction as an object of satisfaction and desire to the miser, there can be no doubt; and it is an influence which increases always as the amount of wealth already accumulated increases. The smallest subtraction from the *illustrious amount*, lessens in his own eyes his own dignity. It seems to him

delightful to be constantly adding to that which, at every addition, makes him more and more illustrious. To take anything from the heap reverses this process. He feels that he is *less* than he was; and with this feeling, which is painful in itself, he does not pause to think how *very* little he is *less;* and how very near in glory one who possesses a hundred thousand pounds, is to him who possesses a hundred thousand pounds and a shilling.

The union of all these feelings, in their highest degree, is probably necessary to form the perfect miser, as he exists only, in rare cases, for the admiration of the world. But in those half-misers, of whom the world is full, they exist in various degrees and proportions, producing those singular contrasts of feelings and situations, which would be ridiculous, if they were not lamentable, and disgusting.

> "Not only the low-born and old
> Think glory nothing but the beams of gold,
> The first young lord, whom in the Mall you meet,
> Shall match the veriest huncks in Lombard-street,
> From rescued candles-ends who raised a sum,
> And starves, to join a penny to a plumb.—
> For love, young, noble, rich Castalio dies;
> Name but the fair,—love swells into his eyes.
> Divine Nominia! thy fond fears lay down;
> No rival can prevail—but half-a-crown."*

According as these feelings rise more or less strongly, and, in a great measure, according as the notion of any particular sum, which may suggest either the

* Young's Love of Fame, Sat. IV.

enjoyment that may be afforded by it, or the regret that may attend its loss, suggests one of these rather than the other, we are to account for those sudden alternations of avarice and generosity which occasionally appear in the same character. "There is no one circumstance," says Fielding, "in which the distempers of the mind bear a more exact analogy to those which are called bodily, than in that aptness which both have to a *relapse*. This is plain in the violent diseases of *ambition* and *avarice*. I have known ambition, when cured at court by frequent disappointments, (which are the only physic for it,) to break out again in a contest for foreman of the grand jury at an assizes,—and have heard of a man who had so far conquered avarice, as to give away many a sixpence, that comforted himself at last, on his death-bed, by making a crafty and advantageous bargain concerning his ensuing funeral with an undertaker who had married his only child."

It is very evident, according to that analysis of the passion of the miser, on which I have ventured, that the mere circumstance of *approaching* and *certain* death, as in the case now quoted, could not have any great effect in lessening the delight of such a bargain; because the delight of profit to the miser does not depend on *enjoyment afterwards to arise from it*, but on feelings of the past, associated with the mere gain itself, or with the loss of gain. Gain is still delightful, loss still painful to him, in the same way as in emotions that agree scarcely in any other respect,—the scenes and countenances which he loves, are still beautiful to *him* who knows that

death is soon to separate him from everything which he admires on earth, and that the loveliness, therefore, which he still sees in all its eloquent expression of continued gentleness and kindness, is a loveliness that, in all which it expresses, must be lost to *him*.

It is equally evident, according to the same analysis, that an accession of wealth, however great, to that which was perhaps only a competence before, will have little chance of lessening avarice, but may, on the contrary, as we see with surprise in many cases of this strange moral anomaly, increase the very avarice that was before scarcely marked as sordid, by rendering more valuable that rich amount which it would be painful to diminish by such ordinary expenses as even frugality allows. The larger the sum possessed, the more nearly does it approach to that beautiful combination of arithmetical figures which delights the imagination as often as it rises like a dream of heaven, and which is, indeed, the only dream of heaven that does arise to the miser, in that voluntary wretchedness to which he has condemned himself,—a wretchedness that has all the mortifications of penance, without the thoughts of virtue and holiness, by which penance is more than soothed, and that must be ever miserable, because a cessation of the miseries that are thus voluntarily induced, would be itself a wretchedness still more dreadful than what is voluntarily suffered.

There are various applications of the theory, which flow from it so evidently, that it is unnecessary to occupy your time in pointing them out. One con-

clusion, however, of great practical importance, it may be of advantage to state particularly. If avarice, as I conceive, has its origin chiefly in the feelings of regret that attend the early expenses of the child, it must be of the utmost importance to prevent, as much as possible, these primary feelings of regret, by endeavouring to lead him to employ the little money which is at his disposal, in such a manner as may make the very remembrance of the little transfer pleasing to him. When the child hastens to throw away whatever is given to him, in the gratification of his gluttonous appetite, we think that we perceive only prodigality arising. It is future parsimony, on the contrary, which we chiefly see,—a parsimony which will be quick to regret, because it has been thoughtlessly quick to squander,—or rather, it is that mixture of prodigality and avarice which almost every prodigal exhibits,—that *societas luxuriæ et sordium*, of which the younger Pliny speaks with so much detestation, when he describes them as singly most unworthy of the noble nature of man, but still more wretchedly disgraceful, when combined, "quæ cum sint turpissima, discreta ac separata, *turpius junguntur*." Even in mature life, the very necessities to which luxurious extravagance leads, preclude all possibility of being generous; and the generous desires which it is thus impossible to gratify, merely on account of selfish indulgences, soon cease to be felt at all. The prodigal is thus almost necessarily a miser, without thinking that he is so; because he is constantly throwing away the

money which he obtains, he forgets the rapacity of his desires themselves; his avarice is not, indeed, the avarice of him who lives and dies in rags and wretchedness,—but, to borrow a very happy expression of Marmontel, it "is a mixture of all the passions which can be satisfied with gold."

LECTURE LXX.

III. PROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS.—6. DESIRE OF POWER,—OF INDIRECT POWER, AS IN AVARICE,—CONCLUDED.—7. DESIRE OF THE AFFECTION OF THOSE AROUND US.—8. DESIRE OF GLORY.

My last Lecture, Gentlemen, was occupied with an inquiry into the nature of one of the most seemingly anomalous of human passions,—a passion that has for its object what is directly valuable *only in relation to other desires*, that disregards, however, the gratification of these very desires to which its object may be considered only as instrumental, and that yet continues, with mad avidity, to labour to accumulate what, but for the enjoyments which are despised and viewed almost with terror, is a burden, and nothing more,—a mass of cumbrous matter, which it is difficult to acquire, and anxious to keep, of no more value in itself, when stamped with the marks of national currency, than when it was buried, with other dross, in the original darkness of the mine.

In what manner the passion of avarice is most probably *formed* in the mind, I endeavoured to ex-

plain to you, by a retrospect of the circumstances that may be supposed most likely to diversify the early pecuniary transactions of the little *barterer*, who begins, in his exchange of pence for toys and sweetmeats, that traffic, which, in more important purchases, is to continue through life,—which renders the preservation of life itself, and the enjoyment of all its external pleasures a sort of commerce, and makes merchants, therefore, in the strictest sense of that term, of the proudest of mankind, who may think, perhaps, that the merchandize which *they* exercise is dignified by the name of expence, but who, in their most luxurious and prodigal expences, are only traders in gold and commodities,—the barterers of certain *sums* of *gold* for certain *quantities* of other *commodities*, which, by mutual consent, are received as equivalents.

In this retrospect of the circumstances in which the passion of the young miser may be supposed to originate, we found reason to ascribe it to a process different from that which is commonly assigned as its origin; and explained, I flatter myself, in conformity with the theory which we were led to form, many seeming irregularities with respect to the influence of the passion, for which it does not seem easy to account, on any other principle.

In relation to the general moral character of the individual who is subject to it, it would not be easy to find a passion that strips him so completely of all that was originally noble in his constitution, as avarice in its extreme degree. Almost every other passion, however inconsistent it may be with the higher

honours of our social nature, has yet some direct relation to mankind. Sensuality itself is not wholly selfish. The more refined voluptuary seeks *society* to enliven and embellish his pleasures; and even he who has stupified in drunken excesses, not his intellectual faculties only, but almost the very feelings that render him a moral being, finds the madness of the maddest drunkenness a more animating pleasure, when shared with some wretched half-human maniac like himself. Even the passions that are absolutely malignant, and that, in separating their victim from the kind offices, and from the common courtesies of life, seem to break the very bond of social affinity, still bring the feelings, the thoughts, the emotions of living beings, as objects ever present to the mind, and thus connect man, in some measure, with man, even on appearing to throw them off with violence from each other. He who *hates* must at least have *man* before him, and must feel some common tie that connects him with the very object of his hate. But to the miser, there is no tie of human feeling. There are no propinquities to him, no friendships; but the place of these is supplied, and fully supplied, by the single passion which occupies his heart. It is not *man*, but a mass of inanimate matter, which is ever before his mind, and almost ever before his very eyes,—or at least which would be almost ever before his eyes, if there were no fear of exposing, as booty, what would otherwise be the delight of his unceasing contemplation. He thinks, indeed, and toils; but he thinks only of

gold,—toils only for gold; and if his gold could be doubled by the annihilation of all beside, he would care little, perhaps, though no other object were to exist, but the mass which he has to measure or compute, and himself the sole happy measurer or computer of it. In his very nature, indeed, he becomes himself almost as little human, as that which he adores. Where his gold is buried, his affections, too, are buried. The figure which Salvian uses, in speaking of this moral torpor of the miser, is scarcely too bold a one,—that his soul *assimilates itself* to his *treasure*, and is transmuted, as it were, into a mere *earthy mass*. "Mens thesaurizontis thesaurum suum sequitur, et quasi in naturam terrestris substantiæ demutatur."

Even if this moral torpor to every kind affection were *all*, the passion of the miser, contemptible as it might seem, would still be only an object of *contempt*, or of a mixture of *disgust and pity*. But with how many positive vices is avarice connected—and how difficult is it for him, who values the possession of wealth as far transcending everything beside, to respect, in any of its forms, when it is opposed to his unjust gain, the restraint of that moral principle, which, in all its forms, seems so poor and insignificant, in comparison with the wealth which it would preclude him from acquiring, or which it would prevent him at least from preserving in all its undiminished beauty! The miser,—even though he were the most sordid of his sordid class,—*might*, perhaps, fulfil *some* of the social duties of life, if

these duties had no relation to gold; but the great misery of his scanty morality, when we consider him in his social connexions, is, that the gold which he loves, is, by its universality of application, as a medium of every external comfort and enjoyment, and consequently of every action by which these can be communicated to others, connected with all, or almost all the duties of life; in requiring which from him, therefore, virtue seems to make from him too extravagant and costly a demand. If no sacrifices were required of him, or if he could be benevolent at a cheaper rate, he might have no great reluctance to be benevolent. To relieve the lowest and most wretched necessities of the indigent, however, even by the pettiest alms, would be to take some few particles from the precious heap. To bring forward into public notice, the genius that is still obscure, because it is beaming only in poverty,—or even the patient industry, that may not yet have found any one to whom its humble talent is an object of demand,—would take from the heap a still greater number of particles;—and to remember, in some cases, the claims of consanguinity or friendship,—even without that dreadful lavishness of expence, which the world would scarcely count generosity,—to remember them with the most cautious sparingness in the *well-measured* benefaction, would be to take from the heap, perhaps, what, if the whole sum were very accurately measured, would make it almost sensibly less. In the ordinary *dealings* of life,—in which generosity, on any side, is out of the

question, and mere justice is all that is required,—the miser *may* be honest; but his honesty, if he have fortitude enough to preserve it, is always in peril, and escapes only by a continual struggle. Not to be a knave, is in him a sort of magnanimity. To avoid even the meanest fraud,—at least to avoid it from any other motive than a fear of law,—is a sacrifice to heroic virtue of the same sort, as it would be to a very generous man to strip himself of the half, or more than the half, of all which he possessed, for the comfort of a suffering stranger.

In the contemplation of many of the passions, that rage in the heart with greatest fierceness, there is some comfort in the thought, that, violent as they may be for a time, they are not to rage through the whole course of life, at least if life be prolonged to old age,—that the agitation, which at every period will have some intermissions, will grow gradually less as the body grows more weak;—and that the mind will at last derive from this very feebleness a repose, which it could not enjoy, when the vigour of the bodily frame seemed to give to the passion a corresponding vigour. It is not in *avarice*, however, that this soothing influence of *age* is to be found. It grows with our growth and with our strength, but it strengthens also with our very weakness. There are no *intermissions* in the anxieties which *it* keeps awake;—and every year, instead of lessening its hold, seems to fix it more deeply within the soul itself, as the bodily covering around it slowly moulders away. What was scarcely necessary in the first

fresh years of youth, when, in the alacrity of health, and with senses quick to every enjoyment, it might have seemed reasonable to attach a high value to the means of providing for the long series of luxuries of a long life,—what was even then scarcely necessary for this abundant provision, is desired more impatiently, when a few spare meals more are all which nature seems to ask for the few remaining hours of exhausted age; and when some other disease, perhaps, in aggravation of the sure disease of age itself, is lessening even the small number of those meals, which nature scarcely can be said still to require. The heart, which is weary of every thing else, is not weary of coveting more gold;—the memory, which has forgotten every thing else, continues still, as Cato says in Cicero's Dialogue, to remember where its gold is stored;—the eye is not dim to *gold*, that is dim to every thing beside;—the hand, which it seems an effort to stretch out and to fix upon any thing, appears to gather new strength from the very touch of the gold which it grasps, and has still vigour enough to lift *once more*, and count *once more*, though a little more slowly, what it has been its chief and happiest occupation thus to lift and count for a period of years far longer than the ordinary life of man. When the relations, or other expectant heirs, gather around his couch, not to comfort nor even to seem to comfort, but to await, in decent mimicry of solemn attendance, that moment which they rejoice to view approaching,—the dying eye can still send a jealous glance to the *coffer*, near which it

trembles to see, though it scarcely sees, so many human forms assembled; and that feeling of jealous agony, which follows and outlasts the obscure vision of floating forms that are scarcely remembered, is at once the last misery, and the last consciousness of life.

Can a passion so odious, and almost so loathsome to our heart, as that which I have now been describing, be subservient to any happy purposes in the general economy of life? It may seem at first, as little capable of having any relation to good, as of enjoying good; and, if we consider any particular case of the passion, in its extreme degree of sordid parsimony, without regard to the elementary feelings that have composed it, and that may exist in other degrees of combination, avarice would *truly* seem to be without any relation to good,—as, in like manner, it would seem, if we were to consider any particular case of the violence of revenge, or of any of the malevolent passions, that the passion which was unquestionably productive of unhappiness to the individual, would be productive also, in this extreme degree, of injury rather than of advantage to society. Yet, injurious as it may be in some cases, we have seen that the susceptibility of resentment, which Heaven has placed in our breasts for the terror of the guilty, is, while there is any possibility of aggression on the part of others, productive of *good upon the whole*, far surpassing all the amount of evil to which, in rarer cases of intemperate violence, it may give rise. It is the general result of the elementary feelings that may have constituted in slow

growth our various passions, which we are to consider in an estimate of this kind,—not their mere occasional evil in certain cases of unfortunate combinations. What we exclusively term *avarice*, is evil,—as that form of implacable or disproportioned resentment which exclusively we call *revenge*, is evil. But avarice is, as we have seen, the result, in certain peculiar circumstances, of feelings which are themselves not advantageous merely, but essential to the happiness, and almost to the very existence of society. If the analysis of the passion of the miser, which I ventured to deliver to you, be just, it is the result of early feelings of regret, that in the particular circumstances in which they arose, were *reasonable* feelings;—and if man were, by his very nature, incapable of feeling *regret*, however absurd and ruinous his expence might have been, what a scene of misery would life have been continually presenting to our eyes? What reliance, amid so many temptations to inconsiderate luxury, could be placed on the fortune of any one even for a single day? And what domestic happiness could there be if the father, the wife, the son, however rich in the morning, might be expected, almost with certainty, to be in indigence at night? Our provident Creator has arranged better the economy of the world. With our sensibility to external enjoyments, and our consequent possibility of being seduced into luxurious and disproportionate indulgence, he has corrected in a great measure this possible evil of what is good in itself, by rendering regret the necessary and uniform, or al-

most uniform attendant of any disproportionate indulgence that lessens in any considerable degree our fortune, and our consequent means of usefulness. *Avarice*, indeed, may be, as we have seen, an *occasional result* of this very feeling; but what is *avarice* in a *few*, is *frugality* in *all beside*; and the advantages, which the general frugality is every moment affording to almost every family of *mankind*, are not too dearly purchased—certainly not purchased at a dearer rate than any other amount of equal good is purchased,—by the small portion of evil that may be found to attend these advantages, as spread over the whole social community. The general *sum* of evil in the world would certainly not be lessened, if the possibility of a few cases of avarice were prevented, by the cessation of those simple feelings in which avarice and frugality alike have their rise; but would, on the contrary, be increased almost to infinity, if these simple feelings were suspended that secure to every family a permanence of enjoyment, by checking the momentary desire of every individual. There is no fear that in the multitude of individuals who form a nation—when there are so many solicitations to enjoyment, and therefore to the expence, without which enjoyment cannot be purchased—any very considerable number of them will be *misers*;—and the wealth of the few who may be denominated misers, however closely it may be coffered for a time, is ever ready to make its escape, and seldom requires more for its deliverance than a mere change of its master:—

"Ask we, what makes *one keep* and *one bestow?*
The Power, which bids the ocean ebb and flow,
Bids seed-time, harvest, equal course maintain,
Through reconcil'd extremes of drought and rain;
Builds life on death,—on change duration founds,
And gives the eternal wheels to know their rounds.
Riches, like insects, when conceal'd they lie,
Wait but for wings, and in their season fly.
Who sees pale Mammon pine amid his store,
Sees but a backward steward for the poor,
This year a reservoir to keep and spare,
The next a fountain, spouting through his heir,
In lavish streams to quench a country's thirst,
And men and dogs shall drink him till they burst."*

The desire which is next in order to those already considered by us, is the desire of *the affection of those around us.*

Of the nature of that delightful emotion, which constitutes *love itself*, in the various relations in which it may exist, I have already treated too fully, to be under the necessity of making any additional remarks on it. But though love,—that feeling of affection for the object that is, or seems to us, amiable,—cannot continue for more than a moment, or at least cannot continue long, without a *desire of reciprocal affection in the object beloved*, the regard which arises instantly on the contemplation of the amiable object, is itself, *as a mere state of the mind*, distinct from the *desires* which may instantly, or almost instantly, succeed it. What, in common language, is termed *love*, indeed,—even without com-

* Pope's Moral Essays, Ep. III. v. 163—176.

prehending in it the desire which we are at present considering,—is itself, as we have seen, a *complex state of mind*, including a delight in the contemplation of its object, and a wish of good to that object; and the term, in its common use, is a very convenient one, for expressing the various kindred feelings, whatever they may be, that are so immediately successive, or so intimately conjoined, as to admit of being briefly expressed together in a single word, without any possibility of mistake. But still it does not require any very subtile discernment to discover, that our feeling of *regard*, whether simple or complex, is itself different from the *desire of that regard*, which we wish to be reciprocally felt for ourselves. We may separate them in our philosophic *analysis*, therefore, though in nature they may usually exist together.

In treating of this desire of the love of others as an object of happiness to ourselves, it would be idle to speak of the necessity of one of these forms of affection, for our very *existence* in those years, when, without the parental love which cherished us, it would have been as little possible for us to *exist*, as for the plant to flourish without the *continued* support of the soil from which it *sprung*. But even after we have risen to maturity, and are able to *exist* by our own care,—or, at least, by those services which we can purchase or command,—how miserable would it be for us to be deprived of all feelings of this happy class! How miserable,—though we should still retain the pleasure that is involved in the affection and the benevolent wishes which we might continue to feel for others,—to think, that these very wishes

of affection were not answered by any reciprocal regard; that not a being around us,—not even one of those whose welfare we were eager to promote, and whose sorrows we felt almost as our own,—had for us any feelings more tender than for the inanimate objects, which were seen and passed without any wish of seeing them again!

I alluded, in a former Lecture, to the misery we should feel, if we lived in a world of breathing and moving statues, capable of performing for us whatever man is capable of performing, but unsusceptible, by their very nature, of any feelings which connected them with us by relations more intimate than those which connect us with the earth on which we tread, or the fruits that nourish us. Yet if these breathing and moving beings were statues *only* to *us*, and were to each other what the individuals of our race, in all their delightful charities, are to those who love them, and those by whom they are loved, how much *more* painful would our strange loneliness be, since we should then seem not *insulated* merely, but excluded, and excluded from a happiness which was every instant *before* our eyes! Even though the same mutual offices were to be continued, there would be no comfort in these mere forms of kindness, if we knew that every *heart*, however warm to others, was still cold to *us*. To think that services performed for us, were performed without the slightest wish for our welfare, would indeed be to feel them as something which it would rather *grieve* than *rejoice* us to receive; and *perfect solitude it-*

self, with all its inconveniencies, would certainly be less dreadful to us, than the ghastly solitude of such a crowd.

So important is it to our happiness, then, that those whom we love should feel for us a reciprocal regard, that Nature has, with a happy provision for this moral *appetite*, if I may so term it,—this *want* or *necessity of our heart*,—which is scarcely less urgent than our other necessities,—endowed us with a ready susceptibility of affection for all who give any demonstration of their affection for *us*. "Si vis amari, ama,"—*Love*, if you wish to be loved,—is a very ancient precept, of which all must have felt the force. *Not* to love those who love *us*, is to our conception a sort of ingratitude, and an ingratitude which would be attended with as much remorse as if we had *sought* the affection as a favour to be conferred on us. The assiduities of a lover, though in most cases arising, without any intention on his part, from the pleasure of the mere assiduities themselves, are still, in some slight degree, prompted by his knowledge of this part of our mental constitution. He knows, indeed, that the thousand attentions which he seeks every opportunity of paying are trifling in their own nature; but he knows that they are, at least, *the expressions of affection*, and, with all the graces and virtues with which he may conceive himself to be adorned, it is to the *sense of his affection* that he trusts, as much, perhaps, as to his own personal endowments, for those gentler feelings which he wishes to excite. If it were possible,

—to make a supposition, which I purposely make extravagant, that I may leave nothing but the influence of affection itself,—if it were possible that, on the most distant and savage spot of the globe, which was scarcely ever visited but by some annual vessel from our island, there could exist a human being, who felt for us an affection such as friends only feel,—though this solitary being had never met our eye, and never could be expected to be seen by us,—though in every thing, but in his love for us, he were as dull as the very brutes around him,—if only we could know that he *existed*, and that he felt for us this ardent sympathy, would it be possible for us to withhold our own sympathy from *him?* Should we have no eagerness, at the return of the annual ship, to inquire into the fate of him to whom that vessel had so often carried tidings of us; and, whatever insensibility we might imagine ourselves to possess, is it possible for us to *imagine* it such, as could enable us to hear without emotion, that the friend, the unknown but faithful friend, for whom we inquired, existed no more?

Such is the influence of affection, and so *happy* that adaptation of Nature by which *love produces love.* In the multitudes which exist together in society, how many are there, whose amiable qualities may be considered as *nearly similar;* and there would, therefore, have been no tie to connect us, in the delightful intercourse of *friendship*, with *one* more than with *another*, if it had not been for the secret and incessant *reaction* of *kindness* on *kind-*

ness,—a reaction that augments courtesy into regard, and warms common regard into all the ardour and devotion of the most zealous love. But for this progressive and mutual agency, the wish of *reciprocal interest* which attends affection, and the gratification of which is so delightful a part of affection, would, indeed, have been a cruel gift. It is a *gracious boon* of Nature, only because she has thus happily adapted, to the love which already exists, the love that is soon to be providing for our desire of fonder regard in the bosoms in which we wish to excite it,—a tenderness, which this very desire is sufficient of itself to awake, and which requires no other influence to cherish it afterwards, than a continuance of the same delightful wishes by which it was originally produced.

The desire, to the consideration of which we are next to proceed, is one akin to that wish of reciprocal affection, which we have now been considering, —the desire of glory,—that passion, to the infinity of whose view the narrow circle, which contains all the objects of our affection, is scarcely a *point;* which connects us with *every human being that exists;* and not with these only, but also with every human being that is to exist in the long succession of ages. "Nature," says Longinus, "has not intended man for a low or ignoble being; but has brought us into life in the midst of this wide universe, as before a multitude assembled at some heroic solemnity, that we might be spectators of all her magnificence, and

candidates for the prize of glory which she holds forth to our emulation."

> "Say, why was man so eminently *raised*
> Amid the vast creation,—why ordain'd
> Through life and death to dart his piercing eye,
> With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame;—
> But that the Omnipotent might send him forth,
> In sight of mortal and immortal powers,
> As on a boundless theatre, to run
> The great career of justice,—to exalt
> His generous aim to all diviner deeds,—
> To chase each partial purpose from his breast;
> And through the mists of passion and of sense,
> And through the tossing tide of chance and pain,
> To hold his course unfaltering, while the voice
> Of truth and virtue, up the steep ascent
> Of nature, calls him to his high reward,—
> The applauding smile of Heaven."*

It is in this boundless theatre, with mankind for our witnesses, and God for our Judge and Rewarder, that we have to struggle with our fortune in that great combat, which is either *glory* or *disgrace*, and according to the result of which, life *is*, or *is not*, a blessing. We know, indeed, the awful presence of our Judge, and this very thought is to us, at times, like the inspiration of some better power with which he deigns to invigorate our weakness. But he is himself unseen by us; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that, while *He is* unseen, and his judgment, on which we depend, still doubtful, we should sometimes cast an anxious look to the eyes of those wit-

* Pleasures of Imagination, B. I. v. 151—166.

nesses who surround us, that we may see, in the approbation or disapprobation which they express, not the certainty, indeed, but at least some probable omens of that high approval, without which there can be no victory, though all around approve, and with which *no failure*, though all around condemn.

The love of glory, it has been truly said, is "the last infirmity of noble minds," *novissima exuitur*. It is not itself virtue, indeed, but

> "What other passion, virtue's friend,
> So like to virtue's self appears?"

"*Contempta fama, contemnantur virtutes.*"—"To despise fame," says Tacitus, "is to despise the virtues which lead to it;" and there can be no question, that he, who is altogether heedless whether every human being regard him as a glory to mankind, or as an object of infamy in himself, and of disgrace to that nature which he partakes, must be almost a god, and raised above the very virtues, as well as the vices of humanity, or he must be the most ignoble of the works of God. To have even our earthly being extended in everlasting remembrance,—to be *known* wherever the name of virtue can reach,—and to be known as the benefactors of every age, by the light which we have diffused, or the *actions* which we have *performed* or *prompted*, —who is there that does not feel some desire of this *additional immortality?*—If, to obtain the mere remembrance of his name, the ferocious oppressor of millions can dare to load himself with every crime,

and submit to be held in universal execration, that the world may still know, by the very hatred and curses which he continues to call forth, that there was on the earth, at a period of many ages back, some malignant being, who could exist only within a circle of misery, and who passed from kingdom to kingdom, carrying with him that desolation, the principle of which seemed inherent in him, and essential to his very existence,—if even this dreadful remembrance be so valuable in the eyes of man, how much more delightful must be the certainty, that the name which we leave is never to be forgotten, indeed; but is never to be forgotten, only because it is to be an object of eternal love and veneration; and that when we shall be incapable ourselves of benefiting the world, there will still be actions performed for its benefit, which would not have been conceived and performed, if *we* had not *existed!*

The desire of glory, then, far from being unworthy of a good man, is as truly worthy of him, as any of those other secondary desires which minister to that primary desire, which is the only one that cannot be too vivid,—the desire of rendering ourselves acceptable by our virtues to Him who made us. This best wish, though it is to be the primary wish of every good heart, surely does not require that we should be indifferent to the regard of those whom it is to be our duty to benefit. If it be not wrong to wish for the *affection* of those around us,—the loss of which would deprive us, I will not say merely of some of our highest delights, but of some of the

most persuasive excitements to moral excellence,—it cannot be wrong to extend this wish of affection *beyond* the circle that immediately *incloses* us, and to derive, from the greater number of those to whose approbation we look, a still stronger excitement to that excellence, on which we found our hope of their approval. *God* and our *conscience*,—these are, indeed, the awarders of our true praise; and, *without* the praise of these, the praise of the world is scarcely worthy of being estimated as anything. But, insignificant as it is, when the voice of our conscience does not accord with it, it is still something *when it echoes to us that voice*, and when, as distinct from our own self-approval, it seems to us the *presage* of *still higher approbation*. It is enough to us, indeed, if God *love* us—But *that great Being* knew well, how feeble is our nature, and what *aid*, as well as *happiness*, it would derive from other affections. He has not formed us, therefore, to love *Himself only*, but to love our parents, our children, our relatives of every order, the wide circle of our friends, our country, mankind. For the same reason, He has given us a love of glory,—not as superseding our love of *His* favourable judgment of our actions, but as supporting us, while we scarcely dare to look with confidence to that perfect judgment,—and, *representing* it to us in some measure, as the affection of the virtuous on earth, represents to us that supreme affection which is in heaven. Those who would banish the love of glory from our breast, *because God is all*, must remember, then, that the very same prin-

ciple would make the love of a father, a wife, a child, a friend, *as indifferent to us*, as if they were not in existence, or were incapable of loving or being loved. Our domestic and social affections may be perverted, as our love of glory may be perverted. Both *may* lead to vice, but as general principles of our constitution, both are auxiliary to virtue.

It is not to love *glory much*, that is *unworthy* of us, as beings that can look to a higher judgment than that of man, and that are formed for a still higher reward than man can bestow,—but to love glory for unworthy objects, or to love it even for worthy objects, more than we prize that approbation which is *far nobler*.

It is, in the first place, truly contemptible, when we seek to be distinguished for qualities, to excel in which, though it may be what the world counts glory, is MORAL *infamy*,—that infamy, which the heart in secret feels, even while it strives to comfort itself with a praise which it knows to be void of consolation. The world, that must have distinctions of some sort to which to look with astonishment, gives a distinction even to vice that transcends all other vice, and every age has *follies* which are *fashionable*. But who is there, who, in all those situations in which the heart most needs to be comforted, in adversity, in sickness, in the feebleness of old age, has ever derived comfort from the thought of having been the first in every folly, or every crime, it may have been the fashion of the idle and profligate to achieve, and of their idle and profligate imitators to

regard with an admiration, still more foolish or criminal than the very crime or folly which was its object?

When glory is thus sought, even by an humble individual, in unworthy objects, it is sufficiently contemptible,—but how much *worse than contemptible is it*, how afflicting to the whole race of mankind, when the individual, who thus seeks glory, is one who is incapable of feeling the excellence of true glory, and has the melancholy power of seeking, in the misery of others, a hateful celebrity, still more miserable than the misery amid which it is sought!

"If, Sire," says an orator, who was worthy, by his virtue and eloquence, of being the teacher of kings, in one of his noble addresses to the young King of France,—"if *this poison infect* the heart of the *prince*—if, forgetting that he is the protector of public tranquillity, he prefer his own false glory to the love and the happiness of his people—if he had rather conquer provinces than reign over hearts, and think it more illustrious to be the destroyer of every neighbouring nation, than the *father* of that which is confided to his care—if the *lamentations of* his *subjects* be the only *song of triumph* that accompanies his victories,—what a scourge has God, in his wrath, given to man, in giving him such a master! His glory, Sire, will be ever sullied with blood. Some madmen will sing, perhaps, his victories, but the provinces, the cities, the villages, will weep them. Superb monuments will be erected to immortalize his conquests; but the ashes, still smoking,

of cities that once were flourishing—the wide desolation of plains stripped of their fertility and beauty—the ruins of the walls under which peaceable citizens lie buried—so many public marks of calamities that are to subsist *after him*, will be sad monuments which are to immortalize his *vanity* and *folly*. He will have passed, like a torrent, to ravage the earth,—not like a majestic river, to bear to it joy and abundance. His name will have its place among conquerors in the annals of posterity, but it will not be to be found in the list of *good kings*; and as often as the history of his reign shall be recalled, it will be only as a memorial of the evils which he has inflicted on mankind."

"The Grecian chief, the enthusiast of his pride,
With rage and terror stalking by his side,
Raves round the globe;—he soars into a god!
Stand fast, Olympus! and sustain his nod!
The Pest Divine in horrid grandeur reigns,
And thrives on mankind's miseries and pains.
What slaughter'd hosts, what cities in a blaze,
What wasted countries, and what crimson seas!
With orphan's tears his impious bowl o'erflows;
And cries of kingdoms lull him to repose."

Such is the melancholy influence of this passion, when it is content with that dreadful celebrity which crimes can give. The desire of glory, however, is not criminal only when it is fixed on unworthy objects; it may err, too, even when fixed on objects that are worthy in themselves, *if* the *praise* itself be

* Young's Love of Fame, Sat. VII.

preferred to the *virtues* which deserve it. There are situations in life in which it is necessary to submit even to the dispraise of men for imputed vices, from which we know that we are free, rather than by the sacrifice of our duty, to *appear more* virtuous by being less worthy of that glorious name. "Non vis esse justus sine gloria! At, mehercule sæpe justus esse debebis, *cum infamia*." Such a trial of virtue is, indeed, one of the hardest trials which virtue has to bear; but it is still a trial which virtue *can* bear. To have the certainty, that by violating a single trust which we have yet the fortitude not to violate, by revealing, in a few words, a secret confided to us, we should immediately appear noble in the eyes of those who look on us now with contempt, is to be in a situation of which the generous, who alone are capable of a moral triumph so exalted, alone are worthy; a situation that is painful, indeed, in many respects, but the pain of which is richly remunerated by the feelings that accompany it, and by the feelings that are to be its eternal reward

LECTURE LXXI.

III. PROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS.—8. DESIRE OF GLORY.

GENTLEMEN, after considering the desire, which it is impossible for any one not to share in some degree, of the affection of those for whom he himself feels regard, and with whom he has to mingle in the familiar intercourse of social life, I proceeded, in the close of my last Lecture, to consider the kindred desire of glory,—the desire of those feelings of wonder and veneration that are to arise in bosoms, of which not the veneration merely, but the very existence, is to be unknown to us.

We have seen how strong this desire of glory is as a passion, whatever may be the nature of the delight which the glory itself yields when attained. Let us now then consider this delight, which is evidently not a simple pleasure, as a subject of analysis, like that which we have employed in considering the happiness that attends some of our other complex emotions.

In the first place, there is involved in the complex pleasure, that pleasure of simple esteem which is an object of our desire, even though one indivi-

dual only were to feel it for us,—a modification of that general desire of affection, which is most obvious and most vivid in the *domestic* relations of life, but which, in its wide circle, embraces all *mankind.*

In the next place, there is a pleasure in the *approbation of others,* as it confirms our own doubtful sentiments. Conscience, indeed, is the great estimater of our actions; but we feel, that even conscience may sometimes *flatter* us, and we seek an additional security on which to lean, while we look back on our own merits or demerits. The desire of glory, therefore, it has been truly said,

> "Is virtue's *second guard,*
> *Reason* her first; but reason wants an aid;
> Our *private* reason is a flatterer;
> Thirst of applause calls *public* judgment in,
> To *prize* our own."

The praise which we receive unjustly, cannot, indeed, unless where the heart is corrupted, make *vice* appear to us virtue; but when it is not thus unjustly given, it makes us *surer* that we *see* virtue where it is; and that we have seen it where it was,—that we have done well, when we trusted in our own heart that we *had* done well.

This then is a second, and very important element of the pleasure of glory.

A third element of the complex delight, is that which, by the greater number of the lovers of glory, is felt as the most important element of the whole, —the pleasure of mere distinction, of a superiority

attained over others, in that of which all are ambitious, or are supposed to be ambitious. Life is a competition, or a number of competitions. We are continually measuring ourselves with others in various excellencies,—in excellencies so various, that there is scarcely anything in which one human being can differ from another, that may not be a subject of internal measurement, and therefore of some degree of joy or sorrow, as the measurement is or is not in our favour. It is in the eyes of others, however, that the competitors for honour wish to distinguish themselves; and the internal measurement, therefore, when it is unfavourable, is painful chiefly, because it is considered by them as representing or corresponding with that which others, too, will form. The voice of glory, then, the most delightful of all voices to their ear, is, at every stage of their progress, a proof that the distinction which they sought has been, to a certain extent, obtained;—that they are recognized as *superiors*,—that they have risen above the crowd,—and that they have now among *their* enviers those to whom the multitude beneath are looking with envy, only because they dare not, in their very wishes, look so high as that prouder eminence which *they* have reached.

There is yet, I cannot but think, in the complex delight of glory, a fourth pleasure, and one which, though it may be less obvious, and founded only on illusion, is not less real in itself. The pleasure to which I allude, consists in the feeling of a sort of extension which glory gives to our being. He who

thinks of us, is *connected with us*. We seem to exist in *his heart*. We are no longer *one*, we are *more than one*, or at least have a wider unity, commensurate with the wideness of the applause which we receive, or flatter ourselves that we are receiving. If we could imagine, at any moment, that there was not a being, in the whole multitude of mankind, whose thought was not fixed on *us*, and fixed with admiration, we should feel as if our own existence, in this delightful moment, were *spread over all*. It would be impossible for any one, in such circumstances, to think of himself as *limited to that little point of space* to which he is truly *confined*. He would live, as it were, along the whole nations of the globe, with a feeling of diffusive consciousness almost like omnipresence, or rather with a feeling of intimate union that is *more than omnipresence*. Some illusion, then, must be in the vivid interest which we attach to undeserved praise. The common theory of the illusion is, that we merely *believe* ourselves to *be* where we are praised, and to hear what is said of us. The illusion, however, appears to me to extend to something which is far more than this, to a *momentary extension of our capacity of feeling*, as if *enlarged* by that of every *one* in whose *mind and heart* we conceive our thought to arise. We have gained, as it were, a thousand souls, at least we seem for the moment to live in a thousand souls; and it is not wonderful that such an extension of our being should seem to us delightful, when the emotions through which it is expanded are those of admiration and love.

Such, then, are the important elements that together form, as I conceive, the delight of contemporary glory. And the praise which we *hear*, or which we are *capable* of hearing, may, it will perhaps be allowed, be *justly* regarded by us as desirable. But what is posthumous glory? and how can man, who reasons at all, it will be said, give to such idle and profitless renown, a single thought, that might be better employed on acquisitions which he is capable of knowing that he has made, and therefore of *enjoying*?

The same *expansion of our being*, as if it existed wherever the thought of us exists, which I conceive to form so important a part of the pleasure of *contemporary praise*, seems to me to furnish the chief circumstance that solves the apparent difficulty of accounting for a desire which to reason may appear so very absurd. There are some circumstances in it, however, which may require a little fuller consideration. Of the universality of the desire of a praise that is not to terminate with the life that is capable of feeling it, there can be no doubt.

"*Love of Fame the universal Passion*," is the title which an ingenious satirist has given to a very lively series of poems; and in another poem, he describes it, in a happy allegory, as the great object which, in the general voyage of life, is sought by all, though attained by few of the adventurers who seek it.

> "Some sink outright;
> O'er them, and o'er their names, the billows close:
> To-morrow knows not they were ever born.
> Others a short memorial leave behind,

Like a flag floating, when the bark's engulph'd;
It floats a moment, and is seen no more:
One Cæsar lives; a thousand are forgot." *

Yet, if, to extinguish a passion, nothing more were necessary than to shew its *absolute futility*, the love of posthumous glory must long have ceased to be a passion, since almost every moralist has proved, with most accurate demonstration, the absurdity of seeking that which must, by its nature, be beyond the reach of our enjoyment,—and almost every poet has made the madness of such a desire a subject of his ridicule; though, at the same time, it cannot be doubted, that, if the passion *could* have been extinguished, either by demonstration or ridicule, we should have had fewer demonstrations, and still less wit on the subject. "Can glory be anything," says Seneca, "when he, who is said to be the very possessor of it, himself is nothing!"—"Nulla est omnino gloria, cum is, cujus ea esse dicitur, non extet omnino."

"Thirst for glory," says Wollaston, "when that is desired merely for its own sake, is founded in ambition and vanity; the thing itself is but a dream, and imagination, since, according to the differing humours and sentiments of nations and ages, the same thing may be either glorious or inglorious; the effect of it, considered still by itself, is neither more health, nor estate, nor knowledge, nor virtue to him who has it; or, if that be any thing, it is but *what must cease* when the man dies,—and after all, as it

* Young's Night Thoughts, B. VIII. v. 195—201.

lives but in the breath of the people, a little sly envy, or a new turn of things, extinguishes it,—or, perhaps, it goes quite out of itself. Men please themselves with notions of immortality, and fancy a perpetuity of fame secured to themselves, by books and testimonies of historians. But, alas! it is a stupid delusion, when they imagine themselves present and enjoying that fame at the reading of their story after their death. And besides, in reality, the man is not known ever the more to posterity, because his name is transmitted to them. *He* does not live because his name does. When it is said Julius Cæsar subdued Gaul, beat Pompey, changed the Roman commonwealth into a monarchy, &c. it is the same thing as to say, the conqueror of Pompey, &c. was Cæsar,—that is, Cæsar and the conqueror of Pompey are the same thing; and Cæsar is as much known by the one designation as by the other. The amount, then, is only this, that the conqueror of Pompey conquered Pompey, or somebody conquered Pompey; or rather, since Pompey is as little known now as Cæsar, *somebody* conquered *somebody*. Such a poor business is this boasted immortality; and such as has been here described, is the thing called glory among us."

"What's fame?" says Pope, addressing Lord Bolingbroke,—

> "A fancied life in others' breath,
> A thing beyond us, even before our death.
> Just what you *hear* you *have*,—and what's unknown,
> The same, my lord, if Tully's or your own.

All that we feel of it begins and ends
In the small circle of our foes and friends;
To all beside, as much an empty shade,
An Eugene living, as a Cæsar dead,
Alike, or when, or where, they shone, or shine,
Or on the Rubicon, or on the Rhine." *

If, then, after we are no more, the reputation of Tully and our own be, with respect to *us* who can enjoy neither, *precisely the same*, why is it that the praise, which the eloquence of the Roman orator must continue to receive from the generations that are to come, affects us with no particular interest,—and that we attach so very strong an interest to the praise, which we flatter ourselves is to accompany our own name? The common explanation which is given of the difference in the two cases is, that we imagine ourselves still present, and conscious of our own glory. But this very imagination is the difficulty to be explained, since it does not depend on any accidental caprice of fancy, but is so permanently attached to the nature of our glory, that whatever number of ages we may suppose to intervene, and though we are abundantly convinced that the praise can never reach us in the time, we yet cannot think of this praise for a single moment with indifference. It has thus every appearance of being an essential part of the complex notion itself; and the explanation which I am about to submit to you, therefore, seems to me the *more* accurate, as it proceeds on this very circumstance. The difference of the inte-

* Essay on Man, Ep. IV. v. 237—246.

rest felt in the two cases supposed, must, if the imaginary *glory* be the same in both, depend on the difference of the conceptions which we form of *ourselves* and *others*, as the subjects of the praise that is to be lavished in the distant periods of which we think; since the imaginary *glory*, as combined with the conception either of *ourselves* or of *others*, forms our whole notion of posthumous reputation. What then is the difference of these two conceptions, on which the whole resulting difference depends? The conception which we have of *another person*, is chiefly of that external form and other qualities, which make him an object of our senses. The conception of *ourselves*, however, is very different—not different merely as our conceptions of other individuals are different—but in kind more than in degree. It is not so much the conception of our external form, as of the various feelings by which we have become sensible of our own existence—the retrospect, in short, of that *general consciousness* which pervades, or rather which constitutes, these feelings, and identifies them all as affections of *one* sentient mind. To think of the reputation of any one, however, is, as I have already remarked, to have the feeling of reputation combined with that complex notion which we have formed of the person; which is usually, when it is not of ourselves we think, little more than the conception of a certain form, or perhaps of certain works of art, of which he has been the author. But the complex notion of *ourselves*, as I have said, is very different. Of this, *consciousness forms an essential part;* and to combine the

reputation, as imagined, with the notion of *ourselves*, is therefore, *necessarily*, to combine it with the *consciousness* which is involved in the very notion of ourselves. We cannot think of what we call self, but as that which is the subject of the various feelings that form to us all which we remember of our life, as the living and sentient being that is capable of hearing praise, and of feeling delight in praise; and to take away this capacity of sense and enjoyment, and to substitute a total insensibility, would be to change the complex notion of that which we call *self*, into one as completely different from it, as our complex conception of *any one* individual is different from our complex conception of *any other* individual of opposite features and form. What is recognised by us as *ours*, then, has been already, and must have been already, combined in our thought, with this very *notion of consciousness*. It is not enough, therefore, to say, that when we take pleasure in the contemplation of our own future glory, we imagine ourselves present and enjoying it; since we can go still farther and say, that in consequence of the very nature of our conceptions, it is *impossible* for us to consider future glory as *our own*, without imagining it as combined with that *consciousness*, which is an elementary and essential part of the very conception of ourselves,—and without which, though the glory itself would be the same, it could not be felt by *us* as *ours*.

It is, in a great measure, from the same cause, that we think with so much horror of the physical circumstances which succeed our death:—

"The knell, the shroud, the mattock, and the grave,
The deep damp vault, the darkness, and the worm."

In explanation of this horror, of which it is impossible for us to divest ourselves, it is usually said, that we *imagine ourselves suffering* what the insensibility which death produces must have rendered altogether indifferent :—and it is true that we *do* form this imagination. But the reason of our forming *this very imagination* is, that the notion of consciousness, as I have now stated, is an actual component part of the complex notion of ourselves, and that, accordingly, whatever it may be which we combine with the complex notion of ourselves, to *that* we *must* attach the consciousness which is a part of it. To think of ourselves in the grave, is not to think of a mere mass of matter, for our notion of *ourselves* is very different. It is to think of that, which, without some capacity of feeling, is not, in our *momentary* illusion, recognised by us as our *self*,—that self which we know only as it is capable of feelings, and which, divested of feeling, therefore, would be, to our conception, like another individual.

In these cases, the feeling of our own reality blends itself with the ideas of imagination, and thus gives a sort of *present existence* to the objects of these ideas, however unexisting and remote. We are present in future ages, in the same way as we are present in distant climates, when we think of our own glory as there,—because, to the conception of *our* glory the conception of that being whom we call *self* is ne-

cessary; and the being whom we call self is known to us only as that which *lives* and *feels*. We do not delight in the contemplation of our posthumous glory, then, because we imagine ourselves present;—but, considering the glory as *our* glory, it is impossible *not* to imagine ourselves present, and, therefore, impossible not to feel, in some degree, during the brief illusion, as if the praise itself were actually heard and enjoyed by us.

Such, then, it appears to me, is *glory*, in the analysis of the complex delight which the attainment of it affords, and in the nature of that illusion which connects us with praise that is never to be heard by us in the most distant climate or age,—converting, in the mere conception of this praise, the praise itself almost into a part of our very being, and rendering the passion for glory one of the strongest passions that influence the conduct of mankind.

The relation which this powerful passion bears to our *moral character*, I have already, in some measure, endeavoured to exhibit to you. I represented it to you as an affection which is far from being unworthy of man, in itself, though often leading, like all the other affections of our nature, to moral improprieties, when the desire is directed on an object that is unworthy of it; as the misdirection of any other of our desires may in like manner be vice, or productive of vice. Many moralists and pious writers,—undoubtedly with the purest intention of elevating above every thing earthly our love of virtue, and our love of that great Being, of whom virtue is

the worship,—have been led to represent the love of glory as a passion that ought not to coexist with these nobler desires, and as necessarily derogating from their sublimer influence. The same argument, however, as I endeavoured to shew you, which would thus render culpable, in some degree, the wish of the esteem of mankind, would render also culpable, in some degree, the wish of the esteem of the smaller number of our relatives and friends—that portion of mankind more immediately connected with us. If it would be wrong to feel pleasure in the thought, that our virtuous use of the talents which Heaven has given us, has excited the esteem and emulation of fifty or one hundred, or hundreds of thousands,—it would be wrong to feel pleasure in the thought, that the same good qualities had excited the esteem of *ten* or *twelve*, since the esteem of those ten or twelve is, in strictness of argument, as little essential to our love of virtue, and the God of Virtue, as the esteem of *millions*. If our actions are to be governed simply by those great views, and if every other affection which coexists with these, and cooperates with them, is to be torn from our bosom, before we can aspire to the character of virtue, how many affections, that foster virtue as much as they promote happiness, must instantly be torn away! Did Epaminondas love his country less, and was his courage or his conduct less formidable to its enemies, because he rejoiced, on the day of his great victory, that his parents were still alive to hear of it?—and do we love our Creator less, because, in practising what he commands, we rejoice that there are hearts

which sympathize with ours,—which loving the same virtue that is loved by us, feel for us the esteem which we should have felt in our turn for them, if the action had been *theirs?* If, indeed, Epaminondas, to gratify some vindictive feeling of those whom he honoured, had deserted to the enemy, we should then have looked on the filial affection as truly immoral in this instance, and unworthy of a mind that had the glorious sense of higher motives;—and if, in our enjoyment of glory, instead of deriving pleasure from the sympathy which others feel in our *virtues*, we were to derive pleasure from their approbation of some *vice* or *folly*, our love of *glory* would, in like manner, be a passion, of which, in this instance at least, it would have been well for us to be divested.

The opponents of the love of glory, then, either say *too much*, or they say *too little*. If they were to contend that no affection should be felt but for God alone, no desire of the esteem of *any* other individual being, however intimately connected with us by the ties of nature or of friendship,—though we might think their doctrine false in itself, and in the highest degree injurious to the happiness of the world, we should at least, in the very error of their doctrine, see some consistency of principle. But if they say, that in our love of approbation and esteem we *may* virtuously extend our wishes beyond the judgment of that Supreme Excellence, which, in placing us in the midst of multitudes of our fellow men, cannot have placed us there to be absolutely indifferent to their opinion, where is it that the limit is to be placed?

If a line of virtue be to be drawn around us, beyond which it would be vice for a single thought of earthly approbation to look, how wide is this moral diameter to be, and how is that feeling, which would be virtue if it related to one hundred, to become instantly vice, when it relates to one hundred and one?

Man should, undoubtedly, love mankind, though they were incapable, by their very nature, of returning his kindness. But our Divine Author has not given us *duties* only to perform. He has made those duties delightful by the reciprocities of affection which he has diffused from breast to breast; and we love mankind, not merely because we feel that it is morally right to love them, or because it is the will of Heaven, but from a social impulse that precedes or accompanies these views, and, in some degree also, because the very intercourse of good offices is a source of some of the happiest gratifications of our life. Of those secondary affections, with which Heaven has graciously sweetened our duties, the esteem or veneration of *mankind*,—of which glory is the expression,—is one of the most pleasing; and, though it may occasionally mislead to *vice*, its general direction is, unquestionably, *favourable* to that virtue which cherishes it, and delights in feeling its reciprocal support.

But still, the love of glory,—though not meriting in itself disapprobation, and though powerful in the aid which it gives even to our noblest feelings, *is*, it must be owned, a desire only of secondary importance. It derives its high value from its concurrence

with the voice within our own breast; which it reflects to us in a thousand gladdening sympathies; and when it is in opposition to these, to obey it, or even to wish to obey it, is not to be in danger of being guilty, but to have been already guilty. It is to be considered, therefore, rather as a delightful excitement, *subsidiary to our weakness*, than as itself a *great directing principle*,—and, either when the glory is sought in unworthy objects, or when the *praise* of *virtue* is preferred to virtue itself, it is not merely unworthy of influencing us, but, as the history of every nation shews in terrifying examples of the past, may lead to excesses which the world, whose mad admiration, or at least the hope of whose mad admiration, excited or encouraged them, may for ages lament.

"It has been often asked," says an eloquent French philosopher, "whether a sense of duty alone may not supply the place of glory. The question does honour to those who make it; but the answer to it is simple. Render all governments just, and give to all men, individually, elevated sentiments,—and then glory will perhaps be useless to mankind. Far be it from me to calumniate human nature. I cannot doubt that there are heroic individuals, who, in doing good, have thought of their duty, and *only of their duty*; and from whom great actions have *escaped* in *silence*. At Athens, there was an altar erected to the unknown god; we might erect, in like manner, an altar with this inscription—*To the virtuous who are unknown*—Unknown during life, forgotten after death, (they were great, though they did not seek the

the praise of greatness,) the less they sought the praise of greatness, the greater they truly were. But, in doing justice to our nature, let us not flatter ourselves with too high an estimate of it. There are *few* of those souls which are *sufficient* to *themselves*, and which march on with a firm step beneath the eye of reason, which guides them, and of God, who looks upon them. The greater number of men, weak by the frailties and inconsistencies of their nature, —weaker still by the examples that are every moment assailing them, and by the value which circumstances too often add to crimes and meannesses,—having neither courage enough to be always virtuous, nor audacity enough to be always wicked, but embracing, by turns, good and evil, without the power of fixing in either,—feel their virtue principally in their remorse, and their strength chiefly in the secret reproaches which they often make to themselves for their weakness. In this state of feebleness, they require a *support*. The desire of reputation, coming in aid of their too weak sense of duty, binds them to that virtue which otherwise they might quit. They would dare, perhaps, to blush to themselves;—they would fear to blush before their nation and their age."

"Nor must we think," he continues, "that even those souls of a more vigorous character, which do not stand in need of glory as a *support*, do not require it at least as a *relief* and a *compensation*. We cry out against Athens for its proscription of great men. But the *ostracism*, of which we complain, is *every-*

where. There is everywhere Envy striving to sully what is beautiful, and to bring down what is elevated. It may be said, that, at the very moment, when Merit appeared in the world, Envy, too, was born, and began her persecution. But Nature, at the same instant, created Glory, and gave it to her in charge, to atone for all the miseries which that persecution was to occasion."

"It seems, indeed, as if virtue and genius, so often oppressed on earth, took refuge, far from the real world, in this imaginary world of glory, as in an asylum in which justice is re-established. There Socrates is avenged,—Galileo acquitted,—Bacon remains a great man. There Cicero fears no longer the sword of the assassin, nor Demosthenes the poison. There Virgil is far above that emperor whom he deified. Gold and vanity are not there to distribute places, and exalt the unworthy. Each individual, by the mere ascendancy of his genius, or of his virtues, *mounts,* and takes his rank. The oppressed arise, and recover their dignity. Those who have been assailed and insulted during the whole progress of their life, find glory at least at the entrance of that tomb which is to cover their ashes. Envy disappears, and Immortality commences."

The desire of glory, then, of which it is impossible for mankind to divest themselves, it would not be well for the happiness of mankind if it were in their power to shake off. But the desire of glory is one state of mind,—the consciousness of the glory itself, as attained, is another state; and all may feel

the desire of that which only few attain. It is not the attainment of glory, accordingly, which adds to the amount of happiness in the world, so much as the mere desire itself in its general influence on action.

In treating of the desire of power, I was led to notice, how much more equally happiness is distributed, than the external differences of pomp and authority would lead us to imagine,—though there can be no reason to fear, that any demonstration of this *most important equality* will ever lead mankind to give up that *desire of power*, which, to far the greater number of mankind, is almost an essential part of their very nature, and which it would be truly unfortunate for mankind, if all should relinquish. The same remark is not less applicable to mere *glory* than to *power*. The illustrious and the obscure are, indeed, very different *to the eyes of others*; but the amount of happiness in the hearts of both, when every necessary deduction is made, is probably very little different; and is, upon the whole, perhaps, at least in many instances, likely to be *greater* in those breasts, in which few would think of seeking it.

The love of glory resembles the love of mere power in this circumstance too, as well as in others, that it must rise still higher, or scarcely feel the pleasure of the height which it has reached; and the tenure of the possessor, I may remark, is almost equally precarious in *both* cases.

> "Denied the public eye, the public voice,
> As if he lived on others breath, he dies.

> Fain would he make the world his pedestal,
> Mankind the gazers, the *sole figure*, he.
> Knows he, that mankind praise against *their will*,
> And mix as much *detraction* as *they can?*
> Knows he, that faithless fame her *whisper* has
> As well as *trumpet*,—that his vanity
> Is so much tickled,—from *not* hearing *all?*"*

If *all* were, indeed, heard,—the detracting whispers of Fame, as well as her clamorous applause,—what lessons of humility would be taught to the vain and credulous, whose ears the whispers cannot reach; and who, therefore, listening only to the louder flatteries that are intended to reach them, consider the praise which is addressed to them, as but a small part of that universal praise, which is everywhere, as they believe, proclaiming their merits; and in their reputation of a few months, which is to fade perhaps before the close of a single year, regard themselves as already possessing immortality!

In our estimates of glory, however, as a source of distinction, the whispers which are not heard are to be taken into account with the praises which are heard; and then, if the *real heartfelt virtues* of both be the same, how very near to equilibrium will be the happiness of the obscure and the illustrious!

The most humble, to be happy, must, indeed, have that feeling of self-approval, which, if a thought of the opinions of others arise, may be sufficient of itself to give the delightful conviction, that, if the heart could be laid open to every gaze, no one could

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* Young's Night Thoughts, B. VIII. v. 490—498.

disapprove. There is thus a sort of purer silent glory implied in the very consciousness of moral excellence; but where this moral satisfaction truly exists, and exists in a mind that does not require to be confirmed in its own internal estimate by the opinion of others, what the world regards as renown would scarcely be felt as an *accession of pleasure.* As mere glory, indeed,—if no evil were to attend it,—that is to say, as an expression of the esteem and gratitude of a world, which the virtuous had sought to benefit, it could not fail to be pleasing; but, however pleasing it might be *in itself*, there are minds, by which, when taken together with all its consequences, it would be dreaded, perhaps, rather than desired, as necessarily depriving of pleasures, which are inconsistent with public eminence, and which they valued still *more* than the celebrity that would preclude them. In such circumstances of virtuous privacy,

> "How far above all glory sits*
> The illustrious master of a name *unknown,*
> Whose worth, unrivall'd and unwitness'd, loves
> Life's sacred shades, where gods converse with men."†

Delightful, then, as glory may be in itself, and useful as the *desire* of it most truly is, as a general auxiliary principle of our nature, the *attainment* of the glory that is so generally wished is far from being necessary to happiness, which in many cases may have accessions

* How far above Lorenzo's glory sits.—*Orig.*

† Young's Night Thoughts, B. VIII. v. 481—484.

of enjoyment from other sources, that would be incompatible with the tumult of glory, and which that tumultuous pleasure scarcely could repay. The highest happiness may, indeed, be that of him who is known as widely as wisdom and virtue can be known —loved universally, and revered for qualities which are worthy of universal reverence. Yet we may still, not the less, say, "Bene qui latuit bene vixit." If there are many who regret that they are doomed to the shade, there are many, too, who repent that they have ever quitted it;—or at least there are many who *might* so repent, if the loss of this very power of repentance were not itself an evil, and one of the worst evils of guilty distinction. "He," says Seneca, in one of the choruses of his tragedy of Thyestes—"*he* feels, indeed, the heaviness of death, who, known too well to all the world, dies unknown to himself."

"Stet quicunque volet potens
Aulæ culmine lubrico:
Me dulcis saturet quies.
Obscuro positus loco,
Leni perfruar otio.
Nullis nota Quiritibus
Ætas per tacitum fluat.
Sic cum transierint mei
Nullo cum strepitû dies
Plebeius moriar senex.
Illi mors gravis incubat
Qui notus nimis omnibus
Ignotus moritur sibi."*

* Last verses of the Chorus concluding the second Act.

High renown can as little be the possession of many as high station; and, if Heaven had appropriated happiness to it, it must have left almost all mankind in misery. It has, in this as in every other instance, dealt more equally with those whom it has raised into glory, and those whom it has left obscure. Each has his appropriate enjoyments; and while Guilt alone can be miserable, it scarcely matters to Virtue, whether it be *known and happy*, or *happy and unknown*.

LECTURE LXXII.

III. PROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS.—9. DESIRE OF THE HAPPINESS OF OTHERS.—10. DESIRE OF THE UNHAPPINESS OF THOSE WHOM WE HATE.—GENERAL REMARKS ON, CONCLUDING THE CONSIDERATION OF OUR PROSPECTIVE EMOTIONS.

GENTLEMEN, the pleasure which glory affords, being evidently not a *simple*, but a *complex* pleasure, engaged us yesterday in an inquiry into the nature of the elementary feelings that compose it,—and we were led, I flatter myself, into some interesting analyses, both of the complex delight of glory itself, and of that *peculiar* illusion of *present reality*, which, however far we may conceive our glory to spread over the earth, and through the ages that are to succeed us, still seems to carry with it, as if necessarily diffused in the very conception, our own ever-present feeling, our own capacity of knowing and enjoying praises which never are to reach our ears.

The two desires which remain to be considered by us, will require but little examination; since they flow so readily from some emotions before examined

at length, as to appear almost *parts* of them, rather than any distinct emotions. The first is our desire of the happiness of others,—a desire that forms, as I have already said in my analysis of love, a part of every affection to which we commonly give that name, and that increases in vividness with every increase of the mere regard; but which, like the desire of reciprocal affection, that is also a part of what is commonly termed *love*, is a state of mind distinguishable from the mere *admiration, respect, regard*, which the sight or conception of the beloved object directly induces, admitting of a ready separation in our thought, however complex the love may be, as it usually exists in nature.

It is this desire of the happiness of those whom we love, which gives to the emotion of love itself its principal delight, by affording to us *constant means of gratification*. He who truly wishes the happiness of any one, cannot be long without discovering some mode of contributing to it. Reason itself, with all its light, is not so rapid, in discoveries of this sort, as *simple affection*, which sees means of happiness, and of important happiness, where reason scarcely could think that any happiness was to be found, and has already, by many kind offices, produced the happiness of hours, before reason could have suspected that means so slight could have given even a moment's pleasure. It is this, indeed, which contributes in no inconsiderable degree to the perpetuity of affection. Love, the mere feeling of tender admiration, would, in many cases, have soon lost its power over the fickle heart, and, in many other

cases, would have had its power greatly lessened, if the desire of *giving happiness*, and the innumerable little courtesies and cares to which this desire gives birth, had not thus, in a great measure, diffused over a single passion the variety of many emotions. The love itself seems *new* at every moment, because there is, every moment, some new wish of love that admits of being gratified,—or rather, it is at once, by the most delightful of all combinations, *new*, in the tender wishes and cares with which it occupies us, and *familiar* to us, and endeared the more, by the remembrance of hours and years of well-known happiness.

The desire of the *happiness of others*, though a desire always attendant on love, does not, however, necessarily, suppose the previous existence of some one of these emotions which may strictly be termed *love*. I already shewed you, when treating of *compassion*, that this feeling is so far from arising necessarily from regard for the sufferer, that it is impossible for us not to feel it, *when the suffering is extreme, and before our very eyes*, though we may, at the same time, have the utmost abhorrence of him who is agonizing in our sight, and whose very look, even in its agony, still seems to speak only that atrocious spirit, which could again gladly perpetrate the very horrors for which public *indignation*, as much as public justice, had doomed it to its dreadful fate. It is sufficient, that *extreme* anguish is before us—we wish it relief before we have paused to love, or without reflecting on our causes of hatred—the wish

is the *direct* and *instant* emotion of our soul in these circumstances—an emotion which, in such peculiar circumstances, it is impossible for hatred to suppress, and which love may strengthen, indeed, but is not necessary for producing. It is the same with our general desire of happiness to others. We desire, in a particular degree, the happiness of those whom we love, because we cannot think of them without tender admiration. But, though we had known them, for the first time, simply as human beings, we should still have desired their happiness—that is to say, if no opposite interests had arisen, we should have wished them to be happy, rather than to have any distress—yet there is nothing in this case, which corresponds with the tender esteem that is felt in love. There is the *mere* wish of happiness to them—a wish, which itself, indeed, is usually denominated *love*, and which may, without any inconvenience, be so denominated in that general humanity, which we call a love of mankind, but which we must always remember does not afford, on analysis, the same results as other affections of more cordial regard, to which we give the same name. To love a friend, is to wish his happiness, indeed, but it is to have other emotions at the same instant, emotions, without which this mere wish would be poor to constant friendship. To love the natives of Asia or Africa, of whose individual virtues or vices, talents or imbecility, wisdom or ignorance, we know nothing, is to wish their happiness; but this wish is all which constitutes the faint and feeble love. It is a wish, how-

ever, which, unless when the heart is absolutely corrupted, renders it impossible for man to be wholly indifferent to man; and this great object is that which nature had in view. She has, by a provident arrangement, which we cannot but admire the more, the more attentively we examine it, accommodated our *emotions* to our means,—making our love most ardent, where our wish of giving happiness might be most effectual, and less, gradually, and less, in proportion to our diminished means. From the affection of the mother for her new-born infant, which has been rendered the strongest of all affections, because it was to arise in circumstances where affection would be most needed,—to that general philanthropy, which extends itself to the remotest stranger, on spots of the earth which we never are to visit, and which we as little think of ever visiting, as of exploring any of the distant planets of our system,—there is a scale of benevolent desire, which corresponds with the necessities to be relieved, and our power of relieving them; or with the happiness to be afforded, and our power of affording happiness. How many opportunities have we of giving delight to those who live in our domestic circle, which would be *lost* before we could diffuse it, to those who are distant from us! Our love, therefore,—our desire of giving happiness,—our pleasure in *having* given it, are stronger *within* the limits of this sphere of daily and hourly intercourse, than *beyond* it. Of *those* who are beyond this sphere, the individuals most familiar to us are those whose happiness we must al-

ways know better how to promote, than the happiness of strangers, with whose particular habits and inclinations we are little, if at all acquainted. Our love, and the desire of general happiness which attends it, are, therefore, by the concurrence of many constitutional tendencies of our nature, in fostering the generous wish, stronger, as felt for an *intimate* friend, than for one who is scarcely known to us. If there be an exception to this gradual scale of importance, according to intimacy, it must be in the case of one who is absolutely a stranger,—a foreigner, who comes among a people with whose general manners he is, perhaps, unacquainted, and who has no friend to whose attention he can lay claim, from any prior intimacy. In this case, indeed, it is evident, that our benevolence might be *more* usefully directed to one who is *absolutely unknown*, than to many who are better known by us, that live in our very neighbourhood, in the enjoyment of domestic loves and friendships of their own. Accordingly, we find, that by a provision which might be termed *singular*, if we did not think of the *universal bounty* and wisdom of God,—a modification of our general regard has been prepared, in the sympathetic tendencies of our nature, for this case also. There is a species of affection to which the stranger gives birth, merely *as being a stranger*. He is received and sheltered by our hospitality, almost with the zeal with which our friendship delights to receive one with whom we have lived in cordial union, whose virtues we know and revere, and whose kindness has been to us no small part of the happiness of our life.

Is it possible to perceive this general proportion of our *desire* of giving happiness, in its various degrees, to the *means* which we possess, in various circumstances of affording it, without *admiration* of an arrangement so simple in the principles from which it flows, and at the same time so effectual,—an arrangement which exhibits proofs of *goodness* in our very *wants*, of *wisdom* in our very *weaknesses*, by the *adaptation* of *these* to each other, and by the ready resources which want and weakness find in these affections which every where surround them, like the presence and protection of God himself?

"O humanity!" exclaims Philocles in the Travels of Anacharsis, "generous and sublime inclination, announced in infancy by the transports of a simple tenderness, in youth by the rashness of a blind but happy confidence, in the whole progress of life by the facility with which the heart is ever ready to contract attachment! O, cries of nature! which resound from one extremity of the universe to the other, which fill us with remorse, when we oppress a single human being; with a pure delight, when we have been able to give one comfort! love, friendship, beneficence, sources of a pleasure that is inexhaustible! Men are unhappy, only because they refuse to listen to your voice: and, ye divine authors of so many blessings! what gratitude do those blessings demand! If all which was given to man had been a mere instinct, that led beings, overwhelmed with wants and evils, to lend to each other a reciprocal support, this might have been sufficient to bring the miserable near to the miserable; but it is

only a goodness, infinite as yours, which could have formed the design of assembling us together by the attraction of love, and of diffusing, through the great associations which cover the earth, that vital warmth which renders society eternal, by rendering it delightful." *

The last desire in our arrangement,—that which we are next to consider,—may seem, indeed, at first to be inconsistent with these delightful feelings of social regard, the importance of which I have repeatedly endeavoured to illustrate to you, though, to those who have felt them, as you all must have felt them, they do not require any argument to prove their importance. The desire which still remains to be noticed, is *our desire of evil to others*,—a desire that bears the same relation to hatred in all its forms, which the desire of *happiness to others* bears to all the diversities of love. It is an element of the complex affection, not the mere *hatred itself*, as the desire of diffusing happiness is only an element of the complex *affection*, which is usually termed love. I have already, in treating of the simple modifications of hatred itself, anticipated the remarks which it might otherwise have been necessary to offer now, on the importance to the happiness of society, of this class of our affections, while society presents any temptations to violence or fraud, that are kept in awe by individual and general resentment; and that,

* Chap. lxxviii.

without these guards, which protect the innocent, would lay waste all that beautiful expanse of security and happiness which forms the social world, making a desert of nature, and converting the whole race of mankind into fearful and ferocious savages, worthy only of inhabiting such a wilderness. As the whole system of things is at present constituted, in other respects, therefore, it is not of less importance that man should be susceptible of *malevolence* on certain occasions, than that he should be susceptible of benevolence in the general concerns of life; and man, accordingly, is endowed with the susceptibility of both.

Like our other emotions, however, our malevolent wishes, important as they truly are, and relatively good as a part of our general constitution, may, as we know too well, be productive of evil when misdirected; and though they have this in common with all our desires, even with those which are essentially most benevolent, that may, in like manner, by misdirection or excess, occasion no slight amount of evil to individuals and society; the misdirection, in the case which we are now considering, may be far more fatal to happiness, and therefore requires a stronger check of misery to restrain it. We may produce evil, indeed, to those whom we wish to benefit, and may produce it, in consequence of our very desire of benefiting them; but, at least, the desire itself was one which it was happiness to feel. It was *something gained* to social enjoyment, though more may have been lost. In our malevolent wishes, however, when they arise where they should not arise,

there is no addition to the general happiness of the world, to allow even the slightest deduction from the misery that is added; but, on the contrary, there is a double evil,—not merely the evil that may be inflicted on others, who are the objects of the malevolence, but that which may be said to have been already inflicted on the mind itself, which has had the painful wish of inflicting evil.

The desire of evil to others,—since it is necessary to the protection of the world only in certain cases, is to be measured, then, in our moral estimates, by the nature of the brief or permanent hatred in which it may have originated; and is allowable, therefore, only in the cases in which the hatred is truly a feeling that *is* necessary in such circumstances for the protection of this social scene. It is virtuous, for example, to feel indignation at oppression; and it is virtuous, therefore, to wish that the oppressor, if he continue to be an oppressor, may not finish his career without punishment, so as to present to the world the dangerous example of guilt, that seems, by its external prosperity, to defy at once humanity and heaven. To take a case of a very different sort, however, it is *not* virtuous, to wish, even for a moment, evil to some successful competitor, who has outstripped us in any honourable career; and the desire of evil in this case is not virtuous, because there is no moral ground for that hatred in which the desire originated, when the hatred was not directed to any quality that could be injurious to general happiness, but had for its only object an excellence that has surpassed us, by exhibiting to the

world qualities which are capable of benefiting, or at least of adorning it, still more than the qualities of which we are proudest in ourselves. Before we think ourselves morally justifiable, then, in any *wish of evil* to those whom we hate, we must be certain that the hatred which we feel is itself morally justifiable, as directed to actions or qualities which it would not be virtuous to view with complacency, or even with indifference; and that, as it is the guilty frame of mind alone which is hateful in the eyes of a good man, the hatefulness must cease in the very moment of repentance, and the wish of the repentance, therefore, as the most desirable of all changes, be a wish that is ever present, to temper even that pure and gentle indignation which the virtuous feel.

There are minds, however, of which the chief wishes of evil are not to those whom it is virtuous to view with disapprobation, but to those whom it is vice not to view with emotions of esteem and veneration. We are eager for distinction in that great theatre of human life, in the wide, and tumultuous, and ever-varying spectacles of which we are at once actors and spectators; and when the distinction which we hoped is preoccupied by another of greater merit, our own defect of merit seems to us not so much a *defect* in *ourselves*, as a *crime* in *him*. We are, perhaps, in every quality exactly what we were before; but we are no longer to our own eyes what we were before. The feeling of our inferiority is forced upon us; and he who has forced it upon us has done us an injury to the extent of the uneasiness which *he* has occasioned, and an injury which, per-

haps, we do not feel more as it has affected us in the estimation of others, than we feel it in the mode in which it has affected us in our estimate of ourselves. An injury, then, is done to us; and the feelings which heaven has placed within our breasts as necessary for repelling injury arise on this instant feeling of evil which we have been made to suffer. But what were necessary for repelling intentional injury, arise where no injury was intended; and though the minds in which they thus arise must be minds that are in the highest degree selfish, and incapable of feeling that noble love of what is noble, which endears to the virtuous the excellence that transcends them, there still *are* minds, *and many* minds, *so* selfish, and *so* incapable of delighting in excellence that is not their own.

The malevolent affection, with which some unfortunate minds are ever disposed to view those whom they consider as competitors, is denominated *jealousy*, when the competitor, or supposed competitor, is one who has not yet attained their height, and when it is the *future* that is dreaded. It is denominated *envy*, when it regards some actual attainment of another. But the emotion, varying with this mere difference of the present and the future, is the same in every other respect. In both cases, the wish is a wish of evil,—a wish of evil to the excellent,—and a wish which, by a sort of anticipated retribution, is itself evil to the heart that has conceived it.

If we were to imagine present together, not a single small group only of those whom their virtues

or talents had rendered eminent in a single nation, but all the sages and patriots of every country and period, without one of the frail and guilty contemporaries that mingled with them when they lived on earth,—if we were to imagine them collected together, not on an earth of occasional sunshine and alternate tempests, like that which we inhabit, but in some still fairer world, in which the only variety of the seasons consisted in a change of beauties and delights,—a world, in which the faculties and virtues, that were originally so admirable, continued still their glorious and immortal progress,—does it seem possible that the contemplation of *such a scene*, so *nobly inhabited*, should not be delightful to him who might be transported into it! Yet there are minds to which no wide scene of torture would be half so dreadful an object of contemplation as the happiness and purity of such a scene,—minds that would instantly sicken at the very sight, and wish, in the additional malevolence of the vexation which they felt, not that all were reduced to the mere level of earthly things, but that every thing which met the eye were unmixed weakness, and misery, and guilt.

This scene is imaginary only; but what is imaginary as thus *combined*, is true in its separate parts. There is happiness on earth, virtue on earth, intellectual excellence on earth; and where these exist and are seen by it, envy is as in that imaginary world. He who has not a whole system of which to wish the physical and moral loveliness destroyed, may

have wishes that would gladly blast at least whatever peculiar beauty is to be found in this mixed system. He may wish all mankind to remain in ignorance of important truths, when the most important truths that could be revealed to them were to be the discovery of any other genius than his own. He may sigh over the relief which multitudes are to receive from institutions of a sage benevolence, which *he* was not the *first* to prompt. If his country be rejoicing at triumphs, that have been triumphs of freedom and humanity still more than of the arms of a single state, he may add his silent consternation and anguish to the rage and grief of the tyrant whose aggressions have been successfully resisted, and may lament that he has not himself become a slave by national disasters, which, in making *all* slaves, would at least have lessened the glory of a rival. He may wish evil even here, as he would have wished it in that better scene; and if he wish it less, it is only because the multitude with whom he has to mix on earth have more imperfections of every sort; and being less worthy, therefore, of love or veneration, are less objects of a hatred that extends in its deadliest rancour only to what is worthy of being loved and venerated.

There is one change, indeed, which, in a single moment, would dissipate all the malevolence of this malevolent spirit. To convert the hatred into a feeling which might not be very different, perhaps, from complacency, it would be necessary only to take away every quality that is worthy of love,—to make

wisdom, folly,—kindness, cruelty,—heroic generosity, a sordid selfishness,—and the glory which was the result of all those better qualities, the execration or disgust of mankind. When the hatred of the virtuous might begin, then the hatred of the envious certainly might cease.

The wishes of evil which flow from such a breast, are, as I have said, evil, in the first place, to the breast which feels them;—as the poisonous exhalation, which spreads death perhaps to others, is itself a proof of the disease of the living carcase that exhales it. Envy is truly, in its own miseries, the punishment of itself.—

> " Risus abest—nisi quem visi movere dolores,
> Nec fruitur somno, vigilantibus excita curis;
> Sed vidit ingratos, intabescitque videndo
> Successus hominum; carpitque et carpitur una
> Suppliciumque suum est."

It is hence, by a sort of contradictory character, what one of the old theological writers has strongly stated it to be,—" at once the justest of passions, and the most unjust,"—" ex omnibus affectibus iniquissimus simul et æquissimus;"—the most unjust, in the wrongs which it is ever conceiving or perpetrating against him who is its object; the justest, in the punishment with which it is ever avenging on itself the wrongs of which it has been guilty.

If even, in thinking of the happiness of those whom they hate, the envious saw only that happi-

ness, as it truly is, mixed with many anxieties, that lessen the enjoyment of honours and dignities to their possessor, the misery with which those dignities of others are regarded would be less. But the chief misery of a mind of this cast is, that the happiness on which it dwells is not happiness which it creates in part to its own conception,—a pure happiness, that seems intense in itself only because it is intensely hated, and that continually grows more and more vivid to the hatred that is continually dwelling on it. The influence of happiness, as thus contemplated by a diseased heart, is like that of light on a diseased eye, that merely, as pained by rays which give no pain to others, imagine the faint colours which are gleaming on it to be of dazzling brilliancy.

When a statue had been erected by his fellow-citizens of Thasos to Theagenes, a celebrated victor in the public games of Greece, we are told, that it excited so strongly the envious hatred of one of his rivals, that he went to it every night, and endeavoured to throw it down by repeated blows, till at last, unfortunately successful, he was able to move it from its pedestal, and was crushed to death beneath it on its fall. This, if we consider the self-consuming misery of envy, is truly what happens to every envious man. He may, perhaps, throw down his rival's glory; but he is crushed in his whole soul, beneath the glory which he overturns.

In thus making the malevolent wishes of the envious heart a source of internal misery, Nature has shewn a provident regard for the happiness of man-

kind, which would have suffered far more general violation, if it had been as delightful to wish *evil*, as to wish *good*. Nor is this true only in cases, in which the malevolent wishes are misdirected against excellence, merely as excellence. The same gentle tempering influence has been provided, as we have seen, for the virtuous benevolence of those, who are malevolent only to cruelty and injustice. It is necessary, indeed, that man should be capable of feeling indignation and resentment in these cases, as of feeling benevolence in the more ordinary happy intercourse of social life. But, since excess in one of these classes of feelings might lead to far more dangerous consequences, than excess in the other, Nature, as I took occasion to point out to you in a former Lecture, has been careful to provide against the *more hurtful excess*, by rendering benevolence delightful in itself, even while its wishes exist merely as wishes,—and resentment painful in itself, while its object is unattained, and, unless in some very obdurate hearts, ready to be appeased by slight atonements,—by the very acknowledgment of the evil done,—or by the mere intervention of a few months or days, between the injury and the moment of forgiveness. On the nature of these feelings, it would be unnecessary, however, to dwell longer;—my only object at present being to point out the place of their arrangement as *prospective emotions*, capable of being separated by internal analysis from those immediate emotions of dislike which constitute the varieties of simple hatred.

When I began the consideration of our *prospective emotions*,—those emotions which regard the *future*, and which may regard it either with desire or fear,—I stated that it would be unnecessary to discuss at length, *first*, *all our desires*, and, then, *all our fears*,—that there was no object, which might not, in different circumstances, be an object of hope and fear alternately, according as the good or evil was present or remote, or more or less probable,—and that the discussion of *one* set of the emotions might, therefore, be considered as supplying the place of a double and superfluous discussion. When, however, any important circumstance of distinction attended the fears opposed to the desires considered by us, I have endeavoured occasionally to point these out to you. I shall not, therefore, at present enlarge on them.

In treating of our emotions,—particularly of those which I have termed prospective,—I have dwelt only on the more prominent forms which they assume,—because, in truth, they exist in *innumerable* forms, as diversified by slight changes of circumstances. It is easy for us to invent generic names, and to class, under these, various affections of the mind, which, though not absolutely similar in *every* respect, are at least analogous in some important respects. But we must not forget, on that account, that the affections, thus classed together, and most conveniently classed together, are still different in themselves—that what we have termed the *desire of knowledge*, for example, as if we had one simple desire of this kind, is generically inclusive of complex feelings as

numerous as the objects existing in the universe; and even far more numerous, since they find objects in the abstract relations of things as much as in things themselves—emotions that have stimulated, and still stimulate, and will for ever continue to stimulate, every inquirer of man, from the first gaze of the infant's trembling eye, which he scarcely knows how to direct on the little object before him, to the sublimest speculations of the philosopher, who scarcely finds, in infinity itself, an object sufficient for his research. On many of our emotions, that shadow into each other by gradations almost imperceptible, it would have been interesting, if my limits had permitted, to dwell at greater length, and to trace and develope them, as varied by the changes of circumstances in which they arise. Indeed, as I have before remarked, under this comprehensive and most interesting class of our mutual affections, might be considered every thing which has immediate reference to the whole ample field of moral conduct—whatever renders man worthy or unworthy of the approving and tranquillizing voice within, and of that eternal approbation of the great Awarder of happiness, of whose judgment, in its blessings or its terrors, the voice of conscience itself, powerful as it may be, is but the short and feeble presage.

The narrowness of my limits, then, I trust, will apologise sufficiently for a brevity of discussion, in many cases, which was unavoidable. In our view of those emotions, however, which, by their peculiar complexity, or general importance, seemed to me worthy of nicer examination, I have endeavoured to

direct your thought as much as possible to habits of *minute analysis*, without which there can be no advance in metaphysical science. This very minuteness of analysis,—to which I wished to accustom you, as much for the sake of habit as for the nicer results of the particular inquiries themselves,—may, in some instances, have led to distinctions, which, to many of you, perhaps, may have seemed superfluous, or too subtile, as requiring from you a little more effort of thought than would have been necessary in following arrangements more familiar to you, though, I conceive, less accurate.—You are not to suppose, however, that in analyzing our complex emotions, and arranging, in different subdivisions, the various feelings that seem to me to be involved in them as *elements*,—I object to the use of the common phraseology on the subject, which expresses, in a single term, many feelings that are truly in nature, either immediately consecutive, or intimately conjoined,—though, in our stricter analysis, I may have found it necessary to divide them. This, you are not to think, any more than you are to suppose, that the chemist, who inquires into the elements of vegetable matter, which exist in a rose or a hyacinth,—and who, after his decomposition of those beautiful aggregates, arranges their elementary particles in different orders, as if the aggregates themselves were nothing, and the elements all,—objects to the use of the simple terms *rose* and *hyacinth*, as significant of the flowers which have been the subjects of his art, and which still continue to have a delightful unity to his senses, even while he knows them to have no real unity, and to

be only a multitude of atoms, similar or dissimilar. What the *rose* and the *hyacinth* are to *him*, our complex feelings are to us. We may know and consider separately, and arrange separately, their various elements, but when we consider them as they exist together, we may still continue to give them, as complex feelings, the names by which, as complex feelings, they are familiarly and briefly expressed.

I now then conclude the remarks which I had to offer on the last order of our mental affections,—the important order of our emotions,—those affections of various kinds, in which almost all that is valuable in our earthly life is to be found, and many of which, we have every reason to believe, are not to be *limited* to those scenes in which they first were felt, but are to share the immortality of our existence, and to become more vivid, as our capacity becomes quicker, for the discernment of that moral or divine excellence which inspired them here,—excellence, on the contemplation of which we have delighted to dwell on earth, even amid the distraction of cares, and follies, and vices, from which, in a nobler state of being, we may hope to be exempt.

In our benevolent emotions, we have remarked, what it is impossible not to remark, their obvious relation to the supreme benevolence of Him who has communicated to us these delightful feelings, and who may be said to have made us after his own image, more in this universality of generous desire with which we are capable of embracing the whole orb of being, than in our feeble intellectual faculties, which, proud as they are of their range of thought,

are unable to comprehend the relations of a single atom to any other single atom. In our malevolent emotions, we have traced, in like manner, their admirable harmony with the other parts of the great system of our moral world, as necessary in the community for the punishment of evil in the guilty individual, and, consequently for the prevention of evil in *others*,—or for the equally salutary punishment of its own evil, which the mind in remorse inflicts upon itself.

> "This double lot
> Of evil in the inheritance of man
> Required for his protection no slight force,
> In ceaseless watch; * and, therefore, was his breast
> Fenced round with passions, *quick* to be *alarmed*,
> Or stubborn to oppose,—with *fear*, more swift
> Than beacons, catching flame from hill to hill,
> Where armies land;—with *anger* uncontroul'd,
> As the young lion bounding on his prey;—
> With *sorrow*, that locks up the struggling heart,
> And *shame*, that overcasts the drooping eye,
> As with a cloud of lightning. These the part
> Perform of eager monitors, and goad
> The soul, more sharply than with points of steel,
> His enemies to shun, or to resist." †

It is in our moral constitution, as in the physical universe. To him who knows the beautiful arrangements of the planetary motions, the very gloom of night suggests the continued influence of that orb

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* "No careless watch."—*Orig.*

† Pleasures of Imagination, second form of the Poem, B. II. v. 570—584.

which is shining in other climes, and which could not have carried light and cheerfulness to *them*, but for the darkness in which we are reposing. To him who considers our malevolent emotions only, these emotions may seem like absolute darkness in our moral day; but he who views them in their relation to the *whole*, perceives their necessity for the preservation of those very feelings of gentle regard to which they seem opposed. In the very resentment of individuals, and the indignation of society, he perceives, at a distance, those emotions of benevolence, which, like the unfading sunshine, are not quenched by the temporary gloom that darkens our little portion of the social sphere, preserving, even in absence, that inexhaustible source of radiance, which is speedily to shine on us as before, with all the warmth and brilliancy of the past.

LECTURE LXXIII.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS ON CONCLUDING THE PHYSIOLOGY OF MIND. — COMMENCEMENT OF ETHICS.—OBLIGATION, VIRTUE, MERIT, DIFFER ONLY IN THEIR RELATION TO TIME.—AN ACTION, IN MORALS, IS NOTHING ELSE THAN THE AGENT ACTING.

In my last Lecture, Gentlemen, I brought to a conclusion my remarks on the various emotions of which the mind is susceptible, and, with these, consequently, my physiological view of the mind, in all the aspects which it presents to our observation; the order of our emotions being, as you will remember, the *last* of the orders into which I divided the mental phenomena.

We have reviewed, then, all the principal phenomena of the mind; and I flatter myself, that *now*, *after* this review, you will see better the reasons which have led me, in so many instances, to deviate from the order of former arrangements; since every former arrangement of the phenomena would have

been absolutely inconsistent with the results of the minuter analysis into which we have been led. With the views of other philosophers, as to the nature and composition of our feelings, I might, indeed, have easily adhered to their plan: but I must then have presented to you views which appeared to myself *defective*; and, however eminent the names of those from whom I may have differed, it appeared to me my duty, in every instance in which I believed their opinions to be erroneous, to express to you my dissent *firmly*, though, I hope, always with that candour, which not the eminent only deserve, but even the humblest of those who have contributed their *wish* at least, and their effort to enlighten us.

In reducing to two generic powers or susceptibilities of the mind, the whole extensive tribe of its intellectual states, in all their variety, I was aware that I could not fail at first to be considered by you as retrenching too largely, that *long list of intellectual faculties* to which they have been commonly referred. But I flatter myself you have now seen, that this reference to so long a list of powers, has arisen only from an inaccurate view of the phenomena referred to them, and particularly from inattention to the different aspects of the phenomena, according as they are combined or not combined with desire, in the different processes of thought, that have thence been termed inventive, or creative, or deliberative.

In like manner, when I formed one great comprehensive class of our emotions, to supersede what appeared to me to have been misnamed, by a very

obvious abuse of nomenclature, the *active powers* of the mind, as if the mind were more active in these than in its intellectual functions, I may have seemed to you at the time, to make too bold a deviation from established arrangement. But I venture to hope, that the deviation *now* does not seem to you without reason. It is only *now*, indeed, after our comprehensive survey of the whole phenomena themselves has been completed, that you can truly judge of the principles which have directed our arrangement of them in their different classes. I know well the nature and the force of that universal self-illusion, by which analyses and classifications that have been made by ourselves, seem always to us the most accurate classifications and analyses which could be made; but, *if* all the various phenomena of the mind admit of being readily reduced to the classes under which I would arrange them, the arrangement itself, I cannot but think, is at least more simple and definite than any other previous arrangement which I could have borrowed and adopted.

In treating of the extensive order of our *emotions*, which comprehends all our *moral feelings*, you must have remarked that I did not confine myself to the mere *physiology* of these feelings as a *part of our mental constitution*, but intermixed many discussions as to *moral duty*, and the *relations* of the obvious contrivances of our moral frame, to the wisdom and goodness of its Author,—discussions which you might conceive to be an encroachment on other parts of the Course, more strictly devoted to the inquiries of ethics and natural theology. These appa-

rent anticipations, however, were not made without intention;—though, in treating of phenomena, so admirably illustrative of the gracious purposes of our Creator, it would not have been very wonderful, if the manifest display of these had of itself, without any farther view, led to those very observations which I intentionally introduced. It was my wish, on a subject so important to the noblest feelings and opinions which you are capable of forming, to impress you with sentiments, which seem to me far more necessary for your *happiness*, than even for your *instruction*,—and to present these to you at the time, when the particular phenomena, which we were considering, led most directly to these very sentiments. It was my wish, too, I will confess, to accustom your minds, as much as possible, to *this species of reflection*—a species of reflection which renders philosophy not valuable in *itself only*,—admirable as it is even when considered in *itself alone*—but still *more* valuable, for the feelings to which it may be made subservient. I wished the great conceptions of the *moral society* in which you are placed,—of the *duties* which you have to perform in it,—and of that *Eternal Being*, who placed you in it—to arise frequently to your mind, in cases in which other minds might think only that *one* phenomenon was very like another phenomenon, or very different from it—that the same name might, or might not, be given to *both*—and that one philosopher, who lived on a certain part of the earth at a certain time, and was followed by eight or ten commentators, affirmed the phenomena to be different, while another philoso-

pher, with almost as many commentators, affirmed them to be the *same*. Of this at least I am sure, that your observation of the phenomena themselves will not be *less quick*, nor your analysis of them less *nearly accurate*, because you discover in them something more than a mere observer or analyst, who inquires into the moral affinities with no higher interest, than he inquires into the affinity of a salt or a metal, is inclined to seek; and even though your observation and analysis of the mere phenomena were to be, as only the ignorant could suppose, less just on that account, there can be no question, that if you had learned to think with more kindness of man, and with more gratitude and veneration of God, you would have profited more by this simple amelioration of sentiment, than by the profoundest discovery that was to terminate in the accession which it gave to mere speculative science.

I now, however, proceed to that part of my Course, which is more strictly ethical.

The Science of Ethics, as you know, has relation to our affections of mind, not simply as phenomena, but as *virtuous* or *vicious*, *right* or *wrong*.

> "Quid sumus et quidnam victuri gignimur—Ordo
> Quis datus,—aut metæ quam mollis flexus, et unde
> Quis modus argento—quid fas optare—quid asper
> Utile nummus habet—patriæ charisque propinquis
> Quantum elargiri deceat,—quem te Deus esse
> Jussit,—et humana qua parte locatus es in re." *

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* Persius. Sat. III. v. 66—72.

In the consideration of questions such as these, we feel, indeed, that philosophy, as I have already said, is something *more than knowledge*—that it at once *instructs* and [illegible]g, as a living and active principle, in our moral constitution, and purifying our affections and desires, not merely *after* they have arisen, but in their very source. It is thus, in its relation to our conduct, truly worthy, and worthy in a peculiar sense, of that noble etymology, which a Roman philosopher has assigned to it as the most *liberal* of studies. "Quare *liberalia* studia dicta sint vides,—quia homini libero digna sunt. Ceterum *unum* studium vere liberale est, quod liberum facit,—sive sapientiæ, sublime, forte, magnanimum, cætera puisilla et puerilia sunt." The *knowledge of virtue is, indeed, that only knowledge*, which *makes* man *free*; and the philosophy which has this for its object, does not merely teach us what we are to do, but affords us the highest aids and incitements when the toil of virtue might seem difficult, by pointing out to us not the glory only, but the charms and tranquil delight of that excellence which is before us, and the horrors of that internal shame which we avoid, by continuing steadily our career. Its office is thus, in a great measure, to be the guardian of our happiness, by guarding that without which there is no happiness.—

> "Whether, on the rosy mead,
> When Summer smiles, to warn the melting heart
> Of Luxury's allurement,—whether, firm
> Against the torrent, and the stubborn hill,

To urge free Virtue's steps, and to her side
Summon that strong divinity of soul
Which conquers Chance and Fate;—or on the height,
The goal assign'd her, haply to proclaim
Her triumph,—on her brow to place the crown
Of uncorrupted praise,—through future worlds
To follow her interminated way,
And bless Heaven's image in the heart of man. *

What, then, is the virtue, which it is the practical object of this science to recommend?

That the natural state of man is a *state of society*, I proved in a former Lecture, when, in treating of our desires in general, in their order as emotions, I considered the *desire of society* as one of these.

That man, so existing in society, is capable of receiving from others *benefit* or *injury*, and, in his turn, of benefiting or injuring *them* by his actions, is a *mere physical fact*, as to which there cannot be any dispute.

But, though the *physical fact* of benefit or injury is all which we consider, in the action of *inanimate things*, it is far from being all of which we think in the case of voluntary agents, when there is not merely *benefit* or *injury* produced, but a previous intention of producing it. In every case of this kind, in which we regard the agent, as willing that particular good or evil which he may have produced, there arise certain distinctive *emotions of moral approbation or disapprobation*—those immediate emo-

* Pleasures of Imagination, 2d Form of the Poem, v. 504—515.

tions, of which, as mere states or affections of the mind, I before treated, when I considered the order of our emotions in general. We regard the *action*, in every such case, when the benefit or injury is believed by us to have entered into the intention of him who performed the action, not as *advantageous* or *hurtful* only, but as *right* or *wrong*,—or, in other words, the person, who performed the particular action, seems to us to have moral *merit* or *demerit* in that particular action.

To say that any action, which we are considering, is *right* or *wrong*, and to say, that the person who performed it has moral *merit* or *demerit*, are to say precisely the same thing,—though writers on the theory of morals have endeavoured to make these *different questions*, and have even multiplied the question still more by other divisions, which seem to me to be only varieties of tautological expression, or at least to be, as we shall find, only the *reference* to *different objects* of *one* simple feeling of the mind.

When certain actions are witnessed by us, or described to us, they excite instantly certain vivid feelings, distinctive to us of the agent, as *virtuous* or *vicious*, *worthy* or *unworthy* of esteem. His *action*, we say, is *right*,—*himself meritorious*. But are these moral estimates of the action and of the agent founded on different feelings, or do we not mean simply, that he, performing this action, excites in us a feeling of moral approbation or disapprobation, and that *all others*, in similar circumstances, performing the same action,—that is to say, willing, in relations

exactly similar, a similar amount of benefit or injury, for the sake of that very benefit or injury,—will excite in us a similar feeling of approbation in the one case, and of disapprobation in the other case? The action cannot truly have any quality which the agent has not, because the action is truly nothing, unless as significant of the agent whom we know, or of some other agent whom we imagine. *Virtue*, as distinct from the *virtuous person*, is a *mere name*; as is *vice*, distinct from the *vicious*. The action, if it be anything more than a mere insignificant word, is a certain *agent in certain circumstances*, willing and producing a certain effect; and the emotion, whatever it may be, excited by the action, is, in truth, and must always be, the emotion excited by an agent real or supposed. We may speak of the fulfilment of *duty*, *virtue*, *propriety*, *merit*, and we may ascribe these, variously, to the action, and to *him* who performed it; but, whether we speak of the action or of the agent, we mean nothing more, than that a certain feeling of moral approbation has been excited in our mind, by the contemplation of a certain intentional production in certain circumstances, of a certain amount of benefit or injury. When we think within ourselves,—Is this what we ought to do? we do not make two inquiries,—first, whether the action be right? and then, whether we should not have merit in doing what is wrong, or demerit in doing what it is right for us to do? we only consider, whether, doing it, we shall excite in others *approbation* or *disapprobation*, and in our-

selves a corresponding emotion of *complacency* or *remorse*. According to the answer which we give to our own heart, in this respect,—an answer which relates to the single feeling of moral approbation or disapprobation,—we shall conceive that we are doing what we *ought to do*, or what we *ought not to do*,—and knowing this, we can have no further moral inquiry to make as to the merit or demerit of doing what is previously felt by us to be right or wrong.

Much of the perplexity which has attended inquiries into the theory of morals, has arisen, I have little doubt, from distinctions, which seemed to those who made them to be the result of nice and accurate analysis, but in which the analysis was verbal only, not real, or at least related to the varying circumstances of the action, not to the moral sentiment which the particular action, in certain particular circumstances, excited. What is it that constitutes an action virtuous? What is it which constitutes the moral obligation to perform certain actions? What is it which constitutes the *merit* of him who performs certain actions? These have been considered as questions essentially distinct; and, because philosophers have been perplexed in attempting to give *different* answers to all these questions, and have still thought that different answers were necessary, they have wondered at difficulties which themselves created, and, struggling to discover what could not be discovered, have often, from this very circumstance, been led into a scepticism which otherwise they might have avoided,—or have stated so many unmeaning

distinctions, as to furnish occasion of ridicule and scepticism to others. One simple proposition has been converted into an endless circle of propositions, each proving and proved by that which precedes or follows it. Why has any one merit in a particular action? Because he has done an action that was virtuous. And why was it virtuous? Because it was an action which it was his *duty*, in such circumstances, to do. And why was it his duty to do it in such circumstances? Because there was a *moral obligation* to perform it. And why do we say, that there was a moral obligation to perform it? Because if he had not performed it, he would have violated his duty, and been unworthy of our approbation.—In this circle we might proceed for ever, with the *semblance* of reasoning, indeed, but only with the semblance; our answers, though verbally different, being merely the same proposition repeated in different forms, and requiring, therefore, in all its forms to be proved, or not requiring proof in any. To have merit, to be virtuous, to have done our duty, to have acted in conformity with obligation,—all have reference to *one* feeling of the mind,—that *feeling of approbation*, which attends the consideration of virtuous actions. They are merely, as I have said, different modes of stating *one* simple truth,—that the contemplation of any one, acting as *we* have done in a particular case, excites a feeling of moral approval.

To this simple proposition, therefore, we must always come in our moral estimate, whatever divi-

sions, or varied references, we may afterwards make. Persons acting in a certain manner, excite in us a feeling of approval; persons acting in a manner opposite to this, cannot be considered by us, without an emotion, perhaps, as vivid, or *more* vivid, but of an *opposite* kind. The difference of our phraseology, and of our reference to the action or the agent, from which, indeed, that difference of phrase is derived, is founded chiefly on the *difference* of the *time*, at which we consider the action as meditated, already performed, or in the act of performance. To be *virtuous*, is *to act* in this way,—to have *merit*, is to *have* acted in this way,—to feel the moral *obligation* or *duty*, is merely to *think* of the *action* and its *consequences*. We imagine, in these cases, a difference of time, as *present*, in the virtue of performing it,—*past*, in the merit of having performed it,—*future*, in the obligation to perform it; but we imagine no other difference.

Why does it seem to us virtue to act in this way? Why does *he* seem to us to have merit, or, in other words, to be *worthy of our approbation*, who *has acted* in this way?—Why have we a feeling of obligation or duty, when we think of acting in this way? The only answer which we can give to these questions, is the same to all,—that it is impossible for us to consider the action, without feeling that, by acting in this way, we should look upon ourselves, and others would look on us, with approving regard; and that if we were to act in a different way, we should look upon ourselves, and others would look

upon us, with abhorrence, or at least with disapprobation. It is, indeed, easy to go, perhaps, a single step or two back, and to say, that we approve of the action as *meritorious*, because it is an action which tends to the good of the world, or because it is the inferred will of Heaven, that we should act in a certain manner,—but it is very obvious that an answer of this kind *does* nothing more than *go back* a single step or two, where the same questions press with equal force. Why is it *virtue, obligation, merit,* to do that which is for the good of the world, or which Heaven seems to us to indicate as fit to be done? We have here the same answer, and only the same answer, to give, as in the former case, when we had not gone back this step. It appears to us *virtue, obligation, merit,*—because the very contemplation of the *action* excites in us a certain feeling of vivid approval. It is this irresistible *approvableness*, if I may use such a word to express briefly the relation of certain actions to the emotion that is instantly excited by them, which *constitutes* to *us*, who *consider the action*, the *virtue* of the *action itself*, the *merit* of him who performed it, the moral *obligation* on him to have performed it. There is *one* emotion; and it seems to us *more than one*, only because we make certain *abstractions* of *times* and *circumstances* from the agent himself, and apply every thing which is involved in our present emotion to these abstractions which we have made—to the action, as something distinct from the agent, and involving, therefore, a sort of virtue, separate from his personal merit,—to

his *own conception of the action*, before performing it, as something equally distinct *from himself*, and involving in it the notion of moral obligation as prior to the action.

If we had not been capable of making such abstraction, the *action* must have been, to us, only the *agent himself;*—and the *virtue* of the *action*, and the *virtue* of the *agent* been, therefore, precisely the same. But we *are* capable of making the *abstraction*,—of considering the good or evil deed, not as performed by one individual, in certain circumstances peculiar to him, but as performed by various individuals, in every possible variety of circumstances. The *same action*, therefore,—if that can truly be called the same action, which is performed perhaps with very different views, in different circumstances,—is, as we might naturally have supposed, capable of exciting in us different emotions, according to this difference of supposed views, or of the circumstances in which those views are supposed to have been formed. It may excite our approval in one case,—or in another case, be so indifferent as to excite no *emotion whatever*,—and in another case, may excite in us the *most vivid disapprobation*. The mere fact, however, of this difference of our approbation or disapprobation, when we consider the circumstances in which an action is performed to have been different, is evidently not indicative in itself of anything *arbitrary* in the principle of our constitution, on which our emotions of moral approbation or disapprobation depend; by which an action,

the same in all its circumstances, is approved by us and condemned, since it is truly *not the same action* which we are considering, when we thus approve, in one set of circumstances, of an action, of which we perhaps disapprove when we imagine it performed in different circumstances. The action is nothing, but as it is the *agent himself, having certain feelings, placed in certain circumstances, producing certain changes.* The agent whom we have *imagined,* when the emotion which we feel is different, is one whom we have supposed to have *different views,* or to be placed in *different circumstances;* and though the mere *changes,* or beneficial or injurious effects produced in both cases, which seem to our *eyes* to constitute the *action,* may be the *same in both cases,* all that is *moral* in the action, the frame of mind of the agent himself, is as truly different, as if the visible action, in the mere changes or effects produced, had itself been absolutely different. The miser, whose sordid parsimony we scorn, exhibits, in his whole life, at least, as much mortification of sensual appetite, as the most abstemious hermit, whose voluntary penance we pity and almost respect. The coward, *when it is impossible to fly,* will often perform actions which would do honour to the most fearless gallantry,—the seeming patriot, who, even in the pure ranks of those generous guardians of the public who sincerely defend the freedom and happiness of the land which they love, is a patriot perhaps *most unwillingly,* because he has no other prospect of sharing that public cor-

ruption at which he rails, will still *expose the corruption* with as much ardour as if he truly thought the preservation of the liberty of his country a more desirable thing than an office in the treasury,—and he, who, *being already a placeman*, has of course a *memory* and a *fancy* that suggest to him very different topics of eloquence, will describe the happiness of that land, over the interests of which he presides, with nearly the same zeal of oratory, whether he truly at heart takes pleasure in the prospect which he pictures, or think the comforts of his own high station by far the most important part of that general happiness, which is his favourite and delightful theme. If we were to watch minutely the external actions of a very skilful hypocrite for half a day, it is possible that we might not discover *one*, in which the secret passion within burst through its disguise; yet, if we had reason before to regard him as a *hypocrite*, the very closeness of the resemblance of his actions, in every external circumstance, to those of virtue, would only excite still more our indignation. They excite these different feelings, however, as I have before said, because the actions, in truth, are not the *same*;—the action, in its moral aspect, being only the mind *impressed with certain views*, *forming certain preferences*, and thus *willing* and *producing certain changes*;—and the mind, in all the cases of apparent similarity, to which I have now alluded, having internal views, as different as the external appearances were similar.

Obvious as the remark may seem, that an *action*

cannot be any thing *distinct* from the agent, more than *beauty* from some object that is *beautiful*,—and that when we speak of an action, therefore, as *virtuous*, without regard to the merit of the particular agent, we only conceive some *other* agent, acting in different circumstances, and exciting in us consequently a different feeling of approbation, by the difference of the frame of mind which we suppose ourselves to contemplate,—it strangely happens, that little attention has been paid to this obvious distinction,—that the *action* has been considered as something *separately existing*, and that we suppose accordingly, that *two* feelings are excited in us immediately by the contemplation of an action,—a feeling of right or wrong in the *action*, and of virtue or vice, merit or demerit in the agent,—which may correspond, indeed, but which may not always be the same;—as if the *agent* could be *virtuous*, and the *action wrong*, or the *action right*, and *he* not *meritorious*, but positively *guilty*. In this way, a sort of confusion and apparent contradiction have seemed to exist in the science of morals, which a clearer view of the agent and the action as *one* would have prevented, and the apparent confusion and contradiction, where none truly exists, have been supposed to justify in part, or at least have led in some degree to conclusions as false in principle, as dangerous in their practical tendency.

No voluntary act, intentionally productive of benefit or injury, can, as it appears to me, excite directly any such opposite sentiments of right in the

action, and demerit in the agent, or wrong in the action, and merit in the agent. We take into account, in every case, the whole circumstances of the individual; and his action in these circumstances is *indifferent* to us, or it excites an emotion of *approbation or disapprobation* more *or less vivid.* The *agent, and the circumstances in which he is placed,* the *agent, and the changes which he intentionally produces,* these are all which truly constitute the *action;* and the action, thus compounded of all these circumstances, seems to us *right* if we approve of it, *wrong* if the emotion, which constitutes moral disapprobation, arise when we consider it.

We may, however, as in the instances which I have already used, after approving or disapproving a particular action, consider some other individual, of different habits and different views, or in circumstances in some other respects different, performing a similar action, that is to say, producing a similar amount of benefit or injury,—in the same way, as, after having seen a green hill, we can *imagine* a hill *yellow* or *black* exactly of the same figure,—and it is as little wonderful, that the *new combination of moral circumstances* should excite in us a *new emotion,* as that a *yellow* or *black* hill should seem to us *less* or *more* beautiful than a *green* one. Though virtue, *as different from the virtuous agent,* is a mere abstraction, like *greenness, yellowness, blackness,* as different from objects that are *green, yellow, black,* it is still an abstraction which we are capable of making; and, having made it in any particular case, we can conceive multitudes to exist with differ-

ent views in the situation in which the single individual existed, whose action we have considered as virtuous. The action,—even though in its effects it may be precisely the same,—will then, perhaps, excite in us very different feelings. It may seem to us worthy of blame rather than of praise; or scarcely worthy of praise at all, or worthy of still higher admiration; but the difference arises from the change of *circumstances* supposed, not from any necessary difference in the principle of our moral judgments. In this way, by imagining some other agent with different views, or in different circumstances, and in this way only, I conceive, we learn to consider actions separately from the particular agent, and to regard the morality of the one as distinct from the merit of the other; when, in truth, the action which we chuse to denominate the same, is, as a moral object, completely different.

If we were present, when any one, unacquainted with the nature of the different lenses of the optician, looked at any small animal through a magnifier, or a multiplier, in a piece of plane coloured glass, we should never think of blaming his sense of vision as imperfect, though he were seriously to believe, that the animal, at which he looked, was much larger than it is, or was not *one* merely, but *fifty*, or was *blue*, not *white*. If, however, we were to conceive others, or the same individual himself, to look at the same object *without the medium interposed*, and to form the *same opinion*, we should then unquestionably ascribe to their vision what we before

ascribed to the mere lens interposed; and, if we conceived our own sight to be perfect, we could not but conceive theirs to be imperfect. It is precisely the same in that distinction of the virtue of an action and the virtue of the agent, which has produced so much confusion in the theory of morals. We conceive, in the one case, the *moral vision of the agent* with the lens interposed; in the other case without the lens; and we make in the one case an allowance, which we cannot make in the other. But still I must repeat, that, in making this very allowance, it is only on account of the difference of circumstances that we make it, and that we cannot justly extend the difference from the mere medium to the living principle on which moral vision depends.

When we speak of an ACTION, then, as virtuous, we speak of it as separated from all those accidental intermixtures of circumstances, which may cloud the discrimination of an individual; when we speak of a *person as virtuous*, we speak of him as acting perhaps under the influence of such accidental circumstances; and though his action, considered as an action which might have been performed by any man under the influence of other circumstances, may excite our moral disapprobation in a very high degree, our disapprobation is not extended to him. The emotion which he excites is pity, not any modification of dislike. We wish that he had been better informed; and when his general conduct has impressed us favourably, we feel perfect confidence, that, in the present instance also, if he had been better informed, he would have acted otherwise.

In reducing all the various conceptions, or at least the conceptions which are supposed to be various, of duty, virtue, obligation, merit, to this *one* feeling, which arises on the contemplation of certain actions —a feeling which I am obliged to term moral approbation or disapprobation, because there is no other word in use to denote it, though I am aware, that *approbation* and *disapprobation*, which seem words of *judgment* rather than of *emotion*, are not terms sufficiently *vivid* to *suit* the *force* and *liveliness* of the sentiment which I wish to express, I flatter myself, that I have in some degree freed this most interesting subject from much superfluous argumentation. Why do we consider certain actions as morally *right*,—certain actions as morally *wrong*? why do we consider ourselves as morally *bound* to perform *certain* actions,—to abstain from certain other actions? why do we feel moral approbation of those who perform certain actions,—moral disapprobation of those who perform certain *other actions*? For an answer to all these, I would refer to the simple emotion, as that on which alone the moral distinction is founded. The very conceptions of the *rectitude*, the *obligation*, the *approvableness*, are involved in the feeling of the *approbation itself*. It is impossible for us to have the feeling, and not to have these,—or, to speak still more precisely, these conceptions are only the *feeling itself* variously referred in its *relation* to the *person* and the circumstance. To know that we should feel ourselves unworthy of *self-esteem*, and objects rather of *self-abhorrence*, if we did not act in a certain manner, is to feel the moral

obligation to act in a certain manner, as it is to feel the moral *rectitude* of the action itself. We are so constituted, that it is impossible for us, in certain circumstances, *not* to have this feeling; and, having the feeling, we *must* have the notions of virtue, obligation, merit. It is vain for us to inquire why we are so constituted—as it is vain for us to inquire why we are so constituted, as to rejoice at any prosperous event, or to grieve at any calamity;—or why we cannot perceive any change, without believing, that in future the same antecedent circumstances will be followed by the same consequents. I may remark, too, that, as in the case now mentioned, it is impossible for us to have the belief of the similarity of the future to the past, simple as this *belief* may seem to be, without having at the same time the conceptions of *cause*, *effect*, *power*; so, in the case of moral approbation and disapprobation, it is impossible for us to have these feelings, however simple they may at first appear, without the conception of *duty*, *obligation*, *virtue*, *merit*, which are *involved* in the distinctive moral feeling, but do not *produce it*, as our notions of *power*, *cause*, *effect*, are *involved* in our belief of the similarity of the future to the past; but are not *notions* which *previously existed* and *produced the belief*; or, to speak more accurately, these notions are not *involved* in the feeling, which is simple, but are rather references made of this one simple feeling to different objects.

When I say, however, that it is vain to inquire *why* we feel the obligation to perform certain ac-

tions, I must be understood as speaking only of inquiries into the nature of the mind itself. Beyond it we may still inquire, and discover what we wish to find, not in our own nature, but in the nature of that Supreme Benevolence which formed us. We do not see, indeed, in the nature of the mind itself, any reason that the present should be considered by us as representative of the future. We know, however, that if man had not been so formed as to believe the future train of physical events to resemble the past, it would have been impossible for him to exist, because he could not have provided what was necessary for preserving his existence, nor avoided the dangers which would then, as now, have hung over him at every step; and knowing the necessity of this belief to our very existence, we cannot think of Him who formed us to exist without discovering, in His provident goodness, the reason of the belief itself. But if the existence of man would have been brief and precarious, without this faith in the similarity of the future, it would not have been so wretched as if the mind had not been rendered susceptible of the feelings which we have now been considering, the feelings of approbation and disapprobation, and the notions and affections that originate in these. I shall not attempt to picture to you this wretchedness—the wretchedness of a world, in which such feelings were not a part of the mental constitution—a world without virtue—without love of man or love of God—in which, wherever a human being met a human being, he met him as a robber or a murderer,

living only to fear, and to destroy, and dying, to leave on the earth a carcase still less loathsome in all its loathsomeness, than the living form which had been animated but with guilt. Our only comfort in considering such a dreadful society is, that it could not long subsist, and that the earth must soon have been freed from the misery which disgraced it.

We know, then, in this sense, *why* our mind has been so constituted as to have these emotions; and our inquiry leads us, as all other inquiries ultimately lead us, to the provident goodness of Him by whom we were made. God, the author of all our enjoyments, has willed us to be moral beings, for he could not will us to be happy, in the noblest sense of that term, without rendering us capable of practising and admiring virtue.

LECTURE LXXIV.

AN ACTION, IN MORALS, IS NOTHING BUT THE AGENT ACTING.—APPARENT EXCEPTIONS TO THIS DOCTRINE.—SOPHISTRY OF THOSE WHO CONTEND THAT MORAL DISTINCTIONS ARE ACCIDENTAL.—MISTAKES OF SOUNDER MORALISTS THAT HAVE GIVEN SOME COUNTENANCE TO THIS SOPHISTRY.—VIRTUE AND VICE MERE ABSTRACTIONS.—THE MIND SOMETIMES IS INCAPABLE OF PERCEIVING MORAL DISTINCTIONS, AS WHEN UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF EXTREME PASSION.—2. THE COMPLEXITY OF ACTIONS MAY MISLEAD US IN OUR ESTIMATE OF GOOD AND EVIL.—3. ASSOCIATION MAY ALSO MISLEAD US.

THE object of my last Lecture, Gentlemen, was to make you acquainted with the nature and source of our *notions of moral excellence and moral delinquency*,—the primary moral notions to which, as the directors of conduct, every ethical inquiry must relate.

In this elucidation of a subject, the most interesting of all the subjects which can come under our review, since it comprehends all that is admired and loved by us in man, and all that is loved by us and

adored in God, I endeavoured to free the inquiry, as much as possible, from every thing which might encumber it,—particularly to explain to you the *real meaning* of some *distinctions*, which, as commonly misunderstood, have led to much superfluous disputation on the theoty of virtue, and, partly in consequence of the inconsistencies and confusion which they seem to involve, have had the still more unfortunate effect of leading some minds to disbelief, or doubt, of the essential distinctions of morality itself.

The most important of these misconceptions relate to our notions of *virtue*, *obligation*, *merit*,—for the origin of which, writers on Ethics are accustomed to have recourse to *different feelings*, and different sources of feeling, but which, I endeavoured to shew you, have all their origin in *one* emotion, or vivid sentiment of the mind—that vivid sentiment which is the immediate result of the contemplation of certain actions, and to which we give the name of *moral approbation*. An *action*, though we often speak of it *abstractly*, *is not*, and *cannot be*, any thing which exists independently of the agent. It is some agent, therefore, real or supposed, whom we contemplate when this sentiment of approbation, in any case, arises,—an agent placed, or imagined to be placed, in *certain circumstances*, having *certain views*, *willing* and *producing* certain effects of benefit or injury. What the *agent* is, as an object of our approbation or disapprobation, *that* his *action* is—for his *action* is *himself acting*. We say, indeed, in some cases, that an *action* is *wrong*, without any loss of *virtue* on the part of the *agent* in the peculiar circumstan-

ces in which he may have been placed,—that it is *absolutely* wrong, relatively right; but, in this case, the *action*, of which we speak as right and wrong in different circumstances, is truly, as I shewed you, in these different circumstances, *a different action*;—that is to say, we consider a *different agent*, acting with *different views*—in which case it is as absurd to term the moral action, that which excites our approbation or disapprobation,—the *same*, as it would be to term a *virtuous sovereign* and his *tyrannical successor* the same, because they have both been seated on the same throne, and worn the same robes and diadem. One individual *putting another individual to death* excites in us abhorrence, if we think of the murderer and the murdered as friends, or even as indifferent strangers. But we say, that the same action of putting to death implies, relatively, nothing immoral, if the individual slain were a robber entering our dwelling at midnight, or an enemy invading our country. It surely, however, requires no very subtile discernment to perceive, that the *murderer* of the *friend* and the *destroyer* of the *foe*,—being *agents*, acting with *different views*, in *different circumstanstances*,—their *actions*, which are only brief expressions of *themselves*, as acting in different circumstances, are truly different; and, being different, may of course be supposed to excite different feelings in him who considers them, without any anomaly of moral judgment. The *same* action, in its only true sense of sameness,—that is to say, the same frame of mind, in circumstances precisely similar,—cannot, then, be

relatively right and *absolutely wrong*; as if the moral distinction were loose and arbitrary. If it be relatively right, it is *absolutely* right; and what we call the *absolute action* that is *wrong*, is a *different action*—an action as different from that which we term relatively right, as a *morass* is different from a *green meadow*—which are both *plains*,—or a *clear rivulet* from a *muddy canal*—which are both *streams*. We do not say, that a morass, though *relatively ugly*, is, with all its relative ugliness, *absolutely beautiful*, because it would be beautiful *in other circumstances*,—if drained, and covered with verdure, and blooming with the wild-flowers of summer,—and still gayer with the happy faces of little groups, that may perhaps be frolicking in delight, where before all was stillness and desolation. Such a meadow is, indeed, *beautiful*; but, to our senses, that judge only of what is before them, not of what the immediate object might have been, or might still be in other circumstances, such a meadow is not a morass; and as little, or rather far less, is the slaughter of half an army of invaders, in one of those awful fields on which the liberty or slavery of a people waits on the triumph of a single hour, to be classed in the same list of actions with the murder of the *innocent* and the *helpless*, though with complete similarity of result in the death of others. If the effect alone could be said to constitute the moral action—both terminate equally in the destruction of human life, and both imply the intention of destroying.

An action, then, as capable of being considered

by us, is not a *thing in itself*, which may have various relations to various agents, but is only another name for some agent, of whom we speak, *real* or *supposed*; and whatever emotion an action excites, is therefore necessarily some feeling for an agent. The *virtue of an action* is the *virtue of the agent*,—his *merit*,—his *conformity to duty or moral obligation*. There is, in short, an *approvableness*, which is felt on considering certain actions; and our reference of this vivid sentiment to the action that excites it, is all which is meant by any of those terms. We are not to make separate inquiries into the nature of that principle of the mind, by which we discover the *rectitude of an action*, and then into the nature of the moral obligation to perform it, and then into the merit of the agent; but we have *one feeling* excited in us by the agent acting in a certain manner,—which is virtue, moral obligation, merit, according as the same action is considered in point of time, when it is the subject, before performance, of deliberation and choice,—of actual performance, when chosen,—or of memory, when already performed. It is all which we mean by moral obligation, when we think of the agent as feeling previously to his action, that, if he were *not* to perform the action, he would have to look on himself with disgust, and with the certainty that others would look on him with abhorrence. It is all which we mean by the *virtue of the agent*, when we consider him acting in conformity with this view. It is *merit*, when we consider him to HAVE acted in

this way;—the term which we use, varying, you perceive, in all these cases, as the action is regarded by us as present, past, or future, and the moral sentiment in all alike being only that one simple vivid feeling, which rises immediately on the contemplation of the action.

The *approvableness* of an action, then,—to use a barbarous, but expressive word,—is at once all these qualities; and the *approvableness* is merely the relation, which *certain actions bear to certain feelings* that arise in our mind on the contemplation of these actions,—feelings, that arise to our feeble heart with instant warning or direction, as if they were the voice of some guardian power within us, that, in the virtues of others, points out what is worthy of our imitation,—in their *vices* what we cannot imitate, without being unworthy of the glorious endowments of which we are conscious; and unworthy, too, of the love of *Him*, who, though known to us by His Power, is known to us still more as the Highest *Goodness*, and who, in all the infinite gifts which he has lavished on us, has conferred on us no blessing so inestimable, as the capacity which we enjoy of knowing and *loving* what is *good*. To say, that an action excites in us this feeling, and to say, that it appears to us *right*, or *virtuous*, or *conformable* to duty, are to say precisely the same thing; and an action, which does *not* excite in us this feeling, cannot appear to us *right, virtuous, conformable* to duty,—any more than an object can be counted by us *brilliant*, which uniformly appears to us ob-

scure,—or obscure, which appears to us uniformly brilliant. To this *ultimate fact*, in the *constitution of our nature*,—the principle, or original tendency of the mind, by which, in certain circumstances, we are susceptible of moral emotions,—we must always come in estimating virtue, whatever *analyses* we may make, or may think that we have made. It is in this respect, as in many others, like the kindred emotion of beauty. Our feeling of beauty is not the mere perception of forms and colours, or the discovery of the *uses* of certain combinations of forms; it is an *emotion* arising from these, indeed, but distinct from them. Our feeling of *moral excellence*, in like manner, is not the mere perception of different actions, or the discovery of the physical good which these may produce; it is an emotion of a very different kind,—a light within our breast, from which, as from the very effulgence of the purest of all truths,

> "Is human fortune gladden'd with the rays
> Of Virtue,—with the moral colours thrown
> On every walk of this our social scene,—
> Adorning for the eye of gods and men
> The passions, actions, habitudes of life,
> And rendering Earth, like Heaven, a sacred place,
> Where love and praise may take delight to dwell."*

That we *do* feel this approbation of certain actions, and disapprobation of certain other actions, no one denies. But the feeling is, by many sophistical

* Pleasures of Imagination.—Second Form of the Poem, B. II. v. 151—157.

moralists, ascribed wholly to *circumstances that are accidental*, without any greater original tendency of the mind to feel, in different circumstances of human action, one or other of these emotions. If man could be born with every faculty in its highest excellence, capable of distinguishing all the remote as well as all the immediate consequences of actions, but free from the prejudices of education, he would, they suppose, look with equal moral love, or rather, with uniform and equal indifference of regard, on him who has plunged a dagger in the breast of his benefactor, and on him who has risked his own life for the preservation of his enemy. There are philosophers, and philosophers, too, who consider themselves peculiarly worthy of that name, from the nicety of their analysis of all that is complex in action,—who can look on the millions of millions of mankind, in every climate and age, mingling together in a society that subsists only by the continued belief of the moral duties of all to all,—who can mark everywhere, sacrifices made by the generous, to the happiness of those whom they love, and everywhere an admiration of such sacrifices,—not the voices of the timid and the ignorant only mingling in the praise, but warriors, statesmen, poets, philosphers, bearing, with the peasant and the child, their united testimonies to the great truth, that man *is virtuous* in promoting the happiness of man;—there are minds which can see and hear all this, and which can turn away, to seek, in some savage island, a few indistinct murmurs that may seem to be discordant with the whole great harmony of mankind!

When an inquirer of this class, after perusing every narrative of every nation, in every part of the globe,—with a faith for all that is monstrous in morality, as ready as his disbelief of prodigies in physics less marvellous, which the same voyagers and travellers relate,—has collected his little stock of facts, or of reports which are to *him* as facts,—he comes forward, in the confidence of overthrowing with these the whole system of public morals, as far as that system is supposed to be founded on any original moral difference of actions. He finds, indeed, everywhere else, parricide looked upon with abhorrence; but he can prove this to be wholly accidental, because he has found, on some dismal coast, some miserable tribe, in which it is customary to put the aged to death when very infirm, and in which the son is the person who takes upon him this office. For almost every virtue, which the world acknowledges as indicated to us by the very constitution of our social nature, he has, in like manner, some little fact, which proves the world to be in an error. Some of these he finds even in the usages of civilized life. What is right on one side of a mountain, is wrong on the opposite side of it; and a river is sometimes the boundary of a virtue, as much as of an empire. "How, then, can there be any fixed principles of morality," he says, "when morality itself seems to be incessantly fluctuating?"

Morality is incessantly fluctuating; or rather, according to this system, there is no morality, at least no natural tendency to the distinction of actions, as

moral or immoral, and we have only a few casual prejudices, which we have chosen to call virtues,—prejudices which a slight difference of circumstance might have reversed, making the lover of mankind odious to us, and giving all our regard to the robber and the murderer. We prefer, indeed, at present, *Aurelius* to *Caligula*; but a single prejudice, more or less, or at least a few prejudices additional, might have made Caligula the object of universal love, to which his character is in itself as well entitled, as the character of that philosophic emperor, who was as much an honour to philosophy as to the imperial purple. And in *what world* is this said? In a world in which Caligula has never had a single admirer, in all the multitudes to whom his history has become known,—a world, in which, if we were to consider the innumerable actions that are performed in it, at any one instant, we should be wearied with counting those which furnish evidence of the truth of moral distinctions, by the complacency of virtue, or the remorse of vice, and the general admiration, or disgust and abhorrence, with which the virtue, when known to others, is loved, and the vice detested, long before we should be able to discover a single action that, in the contrariety of general sentiment with respect to it, might furnish even one feeble exception.

Some apparent exceptions, however, it must still be allowed, the moral scene does truly exhibit. But are they, indeed, proofs of the absolute original indifference of all actions to our regard? Or do they

not merely seem to be exceptions, because we have not made distinctions and limitations which it was necessary to make?

It often happens, that, by contending for too much in a controversy, we fail to establish truths that appear *doubtful*, only because they are mingled with doubtful or false propositions, for which we contend as strenuously as for the true. This, I think, has taken place, in some degree, in the great controversy as to morals. In our zeal for the absolute immutability of moral distinctions, we have made the argument for original tendencies to moral feeling appear *less strong*, by extending it *too far;* and facts, therefore, have seemed to be exceptions, which could not have seemed to be so, if we had been a little more moderate in our *universal affirmation.*

Let us consider, then, what the species of accordance is for which we may safely contend.

That virtue is nothing *in itself*, but is only a general name for certain actions, which agree in exciting, when contemplated, a certain emotion of the mind, I trust I have already sufficiently shewn. There is no *virtue*, no *vice*, but there are *virtuous agents, vicious agents*,—that is to say, *persons* whose actions we cannot contemplate without a certain instant emotion; and what we term the *law of nature*, in its relation to certain actions, is nothing more than the general agreement of this sentiment in relation to those actions. In thinking of virtue, therefore, it is evident that we are not to look for

any thing self-existing, like the universal essences of the schools, and eternal, like the Platonic *ideas;* but a felt relation and nothing more. We are to consider only agents, and the emotions which these agents excite; and all which we mean by the moral differences of actions, is their tendency to excite *one* emotion rather than another.

Virtue, then, being a term expressive only of the *relation* of certain actions, as contemplated, to certain emotions, in the minds of those who contemplate them, cannot, it is evident, have any universality beyond that of the minds in which these emotions arise. We speak always, therefore, relatively to the constitution of our minds, not to what we *might* have been constituted to admire, if we had been created by a different Being, but to what we *are* constituted to admire, and what, in our present circumstances, approving or disapproving with instant love or abhorrence, it is impossible for us not to believe to be, in like manner, the objects of approbation or disapprobation, to Him who has endowed us with feelings so admirably accordant with all those other gracious purposes which we discover in the economy of nature.

Virtue, however, is still, in strictness of philosophic precision, a term expressive only of the relation of certain emotions of our mind to certain actions that are contemplated by us;—its universality is coextensive with the minds in which the emotions arise, and this is all which we can mean by the essential distinctions of morality, even though all mankind

were supposed by us, at every moment, to feel precisely the same emotions, on contemplating the same actions.

But it must be admitted, also, that all mankind do not feel at every moment precisely the same emotions, on contemplating actions that are precisely the same; and it is necessary, therefore, to make some limitations, even of *this* relative universality.

In the first place, it must be admitted, that there are moments in which the mind is wholly incapable of perceiving moral differences—that is to say, in which the emotions that constitute the feeling of these moral differences do not arise. Such are all the moments of very violent passion. When the impetuosity of the passion is abated, indeed, we perceive that we have *done* what we now look upon with horror, but when our passion was most violent, we were truly blinded by it, or at least saw only what it permitted us to see. The moral emotion has not arisen, because the whole soul was occupied with a different species of feeling. The moral distinctions, however, or general tendencies of actions to excite this emotion, are not on this account less certain; or we must say, that the truths of arithmetic, and all other truths, are uncertain, since the mind, in a state of passion, would be equally incapable of distinguishing these. He who has lived for years in the *hope of revenge*, and who has at length laid his foe at his feet, may, indeed, while he pulls out his dagger from the heart that is quiver-

ing beneath it, be incapable of feeling the crime which he has committed; but would he at that moment be abler to tell the square of four, or the cube of two? All in his mind, at that moment, is one wild state of agitation, which allows nothing to be felt but the agitation itself.

"While the human heart is thus agitated," it has been said, "by the flux and reflux of a thousand passions, that sometimes unite and sometimes oppose each other,—to engrave laws on *it*, is to engrave them not on sand, but on a wave that is never at rest. What eyes are piercing enough to read the sacred characters!"

"Vain declamation!" answers the writer from whom I quote. "If we do not *read* the characters, it is not because our sight is too weak to discern them, it is because we do not fix our eyes on them; or if they be indistinguishable, it is only for a moment."

"The heart of man," he continues, "may be considered, allegorically, as an island, almost level with the water which bathes it. On the pure white marble of the island are engraved the holy precepts of the law of nature. Near these characters is one who bends his eyes respectfully on the inscription, and reads it aloud. He is the love of Virtue, the Genius of the island. The water around is in continual agitation. The slightest zephyr raises it into billows. It then covers the inscription. We no longer see the characters. We no longer hear the Genius read. But the calm soon rises from the bosom of the

storm. The island reappears white as before,—and the Genius resumes his employment."

That passion has a momentary influence in blinding us to moral distinctions, or, which is the same thing, an influence to prevent the rise of certain emotions, that, but for the stronger feeling of the passion itself, would arise, may then be admitted; but the influence is momentary, or little more than momentary, and extends, as we have seen, even to those truths which are commonly considered as first entitled to the appellation of *universal*. The moral truths, it must be allowed,—if I may apply the name of truths to the felt moral differences of action,—are, to the impassioned mind, as little universal as the truths of geometry.

Another still more important limitation of the universality for which we contend, relates to actions which are so complex as to have various opposite results of good and evil, or of which it is not easy to trace the consequences. An action, when it is the object of our moral approbation or disapprobation, is, as I have already said, *the agent himself acting with certain views*. These views, that is to say, the intentions of the agent, are necessary to be taken into account, or, rather, are the great moral circumstances to be considered; and the intention is not visible to us like the external changes produced by it, but is, in many cases, to be inferred from the apparent results. When these results, therefore, are too obscure, or too complicated, to furnish clear and immediate evidence of the intention, we may pause

in estimating actions, which we should not fail to have approved instantly, or disapproved instantly, if we had known the intention of the agent, or could have inferred it more easily from a simpler result; or, by fixing our attention chiefly on one part of the complex result, that was perhaps not the part which the agent had in view, we may condemn what was praiseworthy, or applaud what deserved our condemnation. If the same individual may thus have different moral sentiments, according to the different parts of the complex result on which his attention may have been fixed, it is surely not wonderful, that *different individuals*, in regarding the same action, should sometimes approve, in like manner, and disapprove variously, not because the principle of moral emotion, as an original tendency of the mind, is absolutely *capricious*, but because the action considered, though apparently the same, is really different as an object of conception in different minds, according to the parts of the mixed result which attract the chief attention.

Such partial views, it is evident, may become the views of a whole nation, from the peculiar circumstances in which the nation may be placed as to other nations, or from peculiarity of general institutions. The legal permission of theft in Sparta, for example, may seem to *us*, with our pacific habits, and security of police, an exception to that moral principle of disapprobation for which I contend. But there can be no doubt, that theft, as mere theft,—or, in other words, as a mere production of a certain

quantity of evil by one individual to another individual,—if it never had been considered in relation to any political object, would, in Sparta also, have excited *disapprobation* as with us. As a mode of inuring to habits of vigilance a warlike people, however, it might be considered in a very different light; the evil of the loss of property, though in itself an evil to the individual, even in a country in which differences of property were so slight, being nothing in this estimate, when compared with the more important national accession of military virtue; and, indeed, the reason of the permission seems to be sufficiently marked, in the limitation of the impunity to cases, in which the aggressor escaped detection at the time. The law of nature,—the law written in the heart of man, *then* came again into all its authority,—or rather the law of nature had not ceased to have authority, even in those permissions which seemed to be directly opposed to it; the great object, even of those anomalous permissions, being the *happiness of the state*, the pursuit of which *nature* points out to our approbation in the same manner, though not with such vivid feelings, as she points out to us for approbation the endeavour to render more happy the individuals around us. It would be a very interesting inquiry to consider, in this way, all those instances which have been adduced as exceptions to natural law, and to detect the circumstances of real or supposed *good* accompanying the evil permitted, for which the evil itself might, in many cases, seem to have been permitted,—or which,

at least, *lessened* so much the result of evil, in the eyes of those who considered it in the particular circumstances of the age and country, that a very slight temptation might overcome the disapprobation of it, as we find at present, in our civilized society, many evils tolerated,—not because they are not considered to be *evil*, but because the evil seems so slight, as not to imply any gross disregard of morality. This minute analysis of the instances alleged, however,—though it might not be difficult to discover in every case some form of good, which, in the mixed result of good and evil, was present to the approver's mind,—my limits will not allow me to extend; but there is one general remark, which may, in some measure, supply the place of more minute discussion, since it may almost be said to convert these very instances into *proofs* of that general accordance of moral sentiment, in *disproof* of which they are adduced.

When these supposed exceptions are tolerated, why is it that they are tolerated? Is it on account of the benefit or of the injury that coexist in one complex mixture? Is it said, for example, by the ancient defenders of suicide, that it is to be commended, because it deprives mankind of the further aid of one who might still be useful to society, or because it will give sorrow to every relation and friend, or because it is a desertion of the charge which Heaven has assigned to us? It is for reasons very different, that it is said by them to be allowable; because the circumstances, they say, are such, as seem of themselves to point out, that the

Divine Being has no longer occasion for our service on earth, and because our longer life would be only still greater grief or disgrace to our friends, and a burthen rather than an aid to society. When the usages of a country allow the exposure of *infants*, is it not still for some reason of advantage to the community, *falsely* supposed to require it, that the permission is given? Or is it for the mere pleasure of depriving the individual infant of life, and of adding a few more *sufferings* to the general sufferings of humanity? Where is the land that says, Let misery be produced, or increased, because it is misery? Let the production of happiness to an individual be avoided, because it is happiness? Then, indeed, might the distinctions of morality in the emotions which attend the production of good and evil, be allowed to be wholly accidental. But, if nature has *everywhere* made the production of *good* desirable for *itself*, and the production of evil *desirable*, when it *is* desired and approved, only because it is accompanied, or supposed to be accompanied, with good, the very desire of the compound of good and evil, *on this account*, is itself a proof not of love of evil, but of love of good. It is pleasing thus to find nature in the wildest excesses of savage ignorance, and in those abuses to which the imperfect knowledge even of civilized nations sometimes gives rise, still vindicating as it were her own excellence, —in the midst of vice and misery asserting still those sacred principles, which are the virtue and the happiness of nations,—principles of which that very misery and vice attest the power, whether in the

errors of multitudes who have sought evil for some supposed good, or in the guilt of individuals, who, in abandoning virtue, still offer to it an allegiance which it is impossible for them to withhold in the homage of their remorse.

It never must be forgotten, in estimating the moral impression which actions produce, that an action is nothing in itself,—that all which we truly consider in it is the agent placed in certain circumstances, feeling certain desires, willing certain changes, —and that our approbation and disapprobation may therefore vary, without any fickleness on our part, merely in consequence of the different views which we form of the intention of the agent. In every *complicated* case, therefore, it is so far from wonderful, that different individuals should judge differently, that it would, indeed, be truly wonderful if they should judge alike, since it would imply a far nicer measurement than any of which we are capable, of the mixed good and evil of the complex results of human action, and a power of discerning what is secretly passing in the heart, which man does not possess, and which it is not easy for us to suppose man, in any circumstances, capable of possessing.

In complicated cases, then, we may approve differently, because we are, in truth, incapable of distinguishing all the moral elements of the action, and may fix our attention on some of these, to the exclusion of others. Our taste, in like manner, distinguishes what is sweet and what is bitter, when these are simply presented to us;—and there are substances, which are no sooner put in the little mouth of

the infant, than he seems to feel from them pleasure or pain. He distinguishes the *sweet* from the *bitter*, as he distinguishes them in after life. Who is there who denies that there is, in the original sensibility of the infant, a tendency to certain preferences of this kind;—that there are substances which are naturally agreeable to the taste,—substances which are naturally disagreeable,—and that it requires no process of education, no labour of years, no addition of prejudice after prejudice, to make sugar an object of desire to the child, and wormwood of disgust? Yet, in the luxury of other years, there are culinary preparations which the taste of some approves, while the taste of others rejects them; and in all of which it is difficult to distinguish the prevailing element, whether acid, austere, sweet, bitter, aromatic. If the morals of nations differed half as much as the cookery of different nations, we might allow some cause for disbelief of all the natural distinctions of right and wrong. But what sceptic is there, who contends, from the approbation which one nation gives to a sauce or a ragout, which almost sickens *him*—that the *sweet* does not naturally differ from the bitter, as more agreeable, the aromatic from the insipid; and that to the infant, *sugar*, *wormwood*, *spice*, are, as sources of pleasure, essentially the same?

We approve of what we *know*, or suppose ourselves to know, and we approve according as we know or suppose, not according to circumstances which truly exist, but which exist unobserved by us and unsus-

pected. It is not contended, that we came into the world with a knowledge of certain actions, which we are afterwards to approve or disapprove, for we enter into the world ignorant of everything which is to happen in it; but that we came into existence with certain susceptibilities of emotion, in consequence of which, it will be impossible for us, in after life, but for the influence of counteracting circumstances, momentary or permanent, not to be pleased with the contemplation of certain actions *as soon as they have become fully known to us*, and *not* to have feelings of disgust, on the contemplation of certain *other actions*. I am astonished, therefore, that Paley, in stating the objection, "that, if we be prompted by nature to the approbation of particular actions, we must have received also from nature a distinct conception of the action we are thus prompted to approve, which we certainly have not received," should have stated this as an objection, to which "it is difficult to find an answer," since there is no objection to which the answer is more obvious. There is not a feeling of the mind, however universal, to the existence of which precisely the same objection might not be opposed. There is no part of the world, for example, in which the proportions of number and quantity are not felt to be the same. Four are to twenty as twenty to a hundred, wherever those numbers are distinctly conceived; but, though we come into the world capable of feeling the truth of this proportion, when the numbers themselves shall have been previously conceived by us, no one surely con-

tends, that it is necessary, for this capacity, that we should come into the world with an accurate knowledge of the particular numbers. The mind is, by its original constitution, capable of feeling all the sensations of colour, when different varieties of light are presented to the eye; and it has this original constitution, without having the actual sensations, which are to arise only in certain circumstances that are necessary for producing them, and which may never, therefore, be states of the mind, if the external organ of vision be imperfect. Even the boldest denier of every original distinction of vice and virtue, must still allow that we do *at present* look with approbation on certain actions, with disapprobation on other actions, and that, *having these feelings*, we must, by our original constitution, have been *capable of the feelings*; so that if the mere *capacity* were to imply the existing notions of the actions that are to be approved or disapproved, he would be obliged, if this objection had any weight, to allow, that, on his own principles, we must equally have innate notions of right and wrong which we have not, or that we feel certain emotions which we yet had no capacity of feeling. But on an objection which appears to me so very obviously futile, it is idle to dwell so long.

We have made, then, two limitations of that *universality* and *absolute uniformity* of moral sentiment, for which some ethical writers have too strongly contended;—in the first place, when the mind is, as it were, completely occupied, or hurried away by

the violence of extreme passion; and, in the second place, when the action which we consider is not the simple intentional production of good as good, or of evil as evil, in certain definite circumstances, but when the result that has been willed is a *mixture of good and evil*, which it is difficult to discriminate, and in which the good may occur to some minds more readily, the *evil* to *other* minds; or in different stages of society, or different circumstances of external or internal situation, the good may be more or less important, and the evil more or less important, so as to have a higher relative interest than it otherwise would have possessed.

To these two limitations it is necessary to add a third, that operates very powerfully and widely on our moral estimates,—the influence of the principle of association. We are not to suppose, that because man is formed with the capacity of certain moral emotions, he is, therefore, to be exempt from the influence of every other principle of his constitution. The influence of association, indeed, does not destroy his moral capacity, but it gives it new objects, or at least varies the objects in which it is to exercise itself, by suggesting, with peculiar vividness, certain accessory circumstances, which may variously modify the general sentiment that results from the contemplation of particular actions.

One very extensive form of the influence of association on our moral sentiments, is that which consists in the application to *particular cases* of feelings that *belong to a class*. In nature there are no

classes. There are only particular actions, more or less beneficial or injurious. But we cannot consider these particular actions long, without discovering in them, as in any other number of objects that may be considered by us at the same time, certain relations of analogy or resemblance of some sort, in consequence of which we *class* them together, and form for the whole class one comprehensive name. Such are the generic words, *justice, injustice, malevolence, benevolence.* To these generic words, which, if distinguished from the number of separate actions denoted by them, are mere words invented by ourselves, we gradually, from the influence of association in the feelings that have attended the particular cases to which the same name has been applied, attach *one mixed notion,* a sort of compound, or modified whole, of the various feelings which the actions separately would have excited, more vivid, therefore, than what would have arisen on the contemplation of some of these actions, less vivid than what others might have excited. It is enough that an action is one of a class which we term *unjust;*— we feel instantly not the mere emotion which the action of itself would originally have excited, but we feel also that emotion which has been associated with the *class* of actions to which the particular action belongs; and though the action may be of a kind, which, if we had formed no general arrangement, would have excited but slight emotion, as implying no very great injury produced or intended, it thus excites a far more vivid feeling, by borrow-

ing, as it were, from other analogous and more atrocious actions, that are comprehended under the same general term, the feeling which *they* would originally have excited. It is quite evident, for example, that, in a civilized country, in which property is largely possessed, and complicated in its tenure, and in the various modes in which it may be transferred, the infringement of property must be an object of peculiar importance, and what is commonly termed justice, in regard to it, be a virtue of essential value, and injustice a crime against which it is necessary to prepare many checks, and which is thence regarded as of no slight delinquency. The offence of the transgressor is estimated, in such a case, not by the little evil which in any particular case he may intentionally have occasioned to another individual, but, in a great degree also, by the amount of evil which would arise in a system of society constituted as that of the great nations of Europe is constituted, if all men were to be equally regardless of the right of property in others. When we read, therefore, of the tendency to theft, in many barbarous islanders of whom navigators tell us, and of the very little shame which they seemed to feel on detection of their petty larcenies, we carry along with us our own classes of actions, and the emotions to which our own general rules, resulting from our own complicated social state, have given rise. We forget, that to those who consider an action simply as it is, the guilt of an action is an object that is measured by the mere amount of evil intentionally produced

in the particular case,—and that the theft which they contemplate, is not, therefore, in its moral aspect, the same offence that is contemplated by us. I need not trace out, in other cases, the influence of general rules, which you must be able to trace with sufficient precision for yourselves.'

Such, then, is one of the modes in which association operates. But it is not in general rules alone that the influence of the associating principle is to be traced. It extends in some degree to all our moral feelings. There is no education, indeed, which can make the pure benevolence of others hateful to us, unless by that very feeling of our own inferiority which implies in envy itself our reverence, and consequently, our moral approbation of what we hate,—no education which can make pure deliberate malice in others an object of our esteem. But, if there be any circumstance accompanying the benevolence and malice, which tend to the disparagement of the one, and the elevation of the other, the influence of association may be excited powerfully, in this way, by fixing our attention more vividly on these slight accompanying circumstances. The fearlessness which often attends vice, may be raised into an importance beyond its merit, in savage ages, in which fearlessness is more important for the security of the state, and in which power and glory seem to wait on it; the yielding gentleness of benevolence may, in such circumstances, appear *timidity*, or, at least, a degree of softness unworthy of the perfect *man*. In like manner, when a vice is the vice of those whom we love,—of a friend, a brother, a parent,—the influence

of association may lessen, and overcome our moral disapprobation, not by rendering the vice in itself an object of our esteem, but by rendering it impossible for us to feel a vivid disapprobation of those whom we love, and mingling, therefore, some portion of this very regard in our contemplation of all their actions. It is because we have the virtue of loving our benefactor, or friend, or parent, that we seem not to feel, in so lively a manner, the unworthiness of that vice, which is partly lost to our notice, in the general emotion of our gratitude. But when we strip away these illusions, or when the vice is pure intentional malice, which no circumstance of association can embellish, it is equally impossible for us to look upon it with esteem, as it is impossible for us to turn away with loathing from him whose whole existence seems to be devoted to the happiness of others, and to rejoice, as we look upon him, that we are not what he is.

> "Ite ipsi in vestræ penetralia mentis et intus
> Incisos apices, et scripta volumina mentis
> Inspicite, et genitam vobiscum agnoscite legem.
> Quis vitiis adeo stolide, oblectatur apertis
> Ut quod agit velit ipse pati? *Mendacia fallax*
> *Furta rapax*, furiosum atrox, homicida cruentum
> Damnat et in mœchum gladios distringit adulter.
> Ergo omnes una in vita cum lege creati
> Venimus, *et fibris gerimus quæ condita libris.*"

I have made these limitations, because it appears to me that much confusion, on the subject of morals, has arisen from inattention to these, and from the too great claims which have sometimes been made

by the assertors of what they have termed immutable morality. The influence of temporary passion,—of the complication of good with evil, and of evil with good, in one mixed result,—and of general or individual associations, that mingle with these complex results some new elements of remembered pain or pleasure, dislike or regard, it seems to me absurd to attempt to deny. But, admitting these indisputable influences, it seems to me equally unreasonable not to admit the existence of that original susceptibility of moral emotion, which precedes the momentary passion, and outlasts it,—which, in admiring the complex result of good and evil, admires always some form of good,—and which is itself the source of the chief delights or sorrows which the associations of memory furnish as additional elements in our moral estimate.

LECTURE LXXV.

RETROSPECT OF LAST LECTURE.—THE PRIMARY DISTINCTIONS OF MORALITY IMPLANTED IN EVERY HUMAN HEART, AND NEVER COMPLETELY EFFACED.

GENTLEMEN, having traced, in a former Lecture, our notions of *virtue, obligation, merit,* to *one simple feeling of the mind,*—a feeling of vivid approval of the frame of mind of the agent,—which arises on the contemplation of certain actions, and the capacity of which is as truly essential to our mental constitution, as the capacity of sensation, memory, reason, or of any of the other feelings of which our mind is susceptible,—I considered, in my last Lecture, the arguments in opposition to this principle, as an original tendency of the mind, drawn from some apparent irregularities of moral sentiment in different ages and countries.

For determining the force of such instances, however, as objections to the original distinctions of

morality, it was necessary to consider precisely, what is meant by that general accordance of moral sentiment, which the world may be considered as truly exhibiting. It is only by contending for more than the precise truth, that, in many instances, we furnish its opponents with the little triumphs, which seem to them like perfect victory. We give to the truth itself an appearance of doubtfulness, because we have combined it with what is doubtful, or, perhaps, altogether false.

In the first place, the language which the assertors of virtue are in the habit of employing, when they speak of the eternity and absolute immutability of moral truth, might almost lead to the belief of something self-existing, which could not vary in any circumstances, nor be less powerful at any moment, than at any other moment. Virtue, however, it is evident, is nothing in itself, but is only a general name for *certain actions*, which excite, when contemplated by us, certain emotions. It is a felt relation to certain emotions, and nothing more, with no other universality, therefore, than that of the minds, in which, on the contemplation of the same actions, the same emotions arise. We speak always of what our mind is formed to admire or hate,—not of what it might have been formed to estimate differently; and the supposed immutability, therefore, has regard only to the existing constitution of things under that Divine Being, who has formed our social nature as it is, and who, in thus forming it, may be considered

as marking his own approbation of that virtue which we love, and his own disapprobation of that vice, which he has rendered it impossible for us not to view with indignation or disgust.

Such is the moderate sense of the absolute immutability of virtue, for which alone we can contend; a sense in which virtue itself is supposed to become known to us as an object of our thought only, in consequence of certain emotions which it excites, and with which it is coextensive and commensurable; but, even in this moderate sense, it was necessary to make some limitations of the uniformity of sentiment supposed; since it is abundantly evident, that the same actions,—that is to say, the same agents, in the same circumstances, willing and producing the same effects,—are not regarded by all mankind with feelings precisely the same, nor even with feelings precisely the same by the same individual in every moment of his life.

The first limitation which I made relates to the moments, in which the mind is completely occupied and absorbed in other feelings,—when, for example, it is under the temporary influence of *extreme passion*, which incapacitates the mind for perceiving *moral distinctions, as it incapacitates it for perceiving distinctions of every sort.*—Virtue, though lost to our perception for a moment, however, is immediately perceived again with distinct vision as before, as soon as the agitation subsides:—It is like the image of the sky on the bosom of a lake, which va-

nishes, indeed, while the waters are ruffled, but which reappears more and more distinctly, as every little wave sinks gradually to rest,—till the returning calm shews again in all its purity the image of that Heaven, which has never ceased to shine on it.

The influence of *passion*, then, powerful as it unquestionably is in obstructing those peculiar emotions in which our moral discernment consists, is limited to the short period during which the *passion rages*. We are *then* as little capable of perceiving moral differences, as we should be, in the same circumstances, of distinguishing the universal truths of geometry; and in both cases, from the same law of the mind,—that general law, by which one very vivid feeling of any sort lessens in proportion the vividness of any other feeling that may coexist with it, or, in other cases, prevents the rise of feelings that are not accordant with the prevailing emotion, by inducing, in more ready suggestion, the feelings that are accordant with it.

The next limitation which we made is of more consequence, as being far more extensive, and operating, therefore, in some degree, in almost all the moral estimates which we form. This second limitation relates to cases in which the result of actions is *complicated* by a *mixture of good and evil*, and in which we may fix upon the *good*, when others fix on the *evil*, and may infer the intention in the agent of *producing this good*, which is a part of the mixed result, while others may conceive him to have had in view the *partial evil*. The same actions, there-

fore, may be approved and disapproved *in different ages and countries*, from the greater importance attached to the *good* or to the *evil* of such compound results, in relation to the general circumstances of society, or the influence, perhaps, of political errors, as to the consequences of advantage or injury to society of these particular actions; and, in the *same age*, and the *same country*, different *individuals* may regard the same action with very different moral feelings, from the higher attention paid to certain *partial* results of it, and the different *presumptions* thence formed as to the benevolent or injurious intentions of the agent. All this, it is evident, might take place without the slightest mutability of the principle of moral sentiments; because, though the action which is estimated may *seem* to be the *same* in the cases in which it is approved and condemned, it is truly a *different action* which is so approved and condemned;—a different *action* in the only sense in which an *action* has any meaning, as signifying the *agent himself having certain views, and willing, in consequence*, certain effects of supposed benefit or injury.

A third limitation, often co-operating with the former, relates to the influence of *habit and association in general*, whether as extending to particular actions the emotions that have been gradually connected with the whole class of actions under which they have been arranged, or as modifying the sentiments of individuals by circumstances peculiar to the individuals themselves. It is pleasing to love

those who are around us; it is pleasing, above all, to love our immediate friends, and those domestic relations to whom we owe our being, or to whose society, in the first friendships which we were capable of forming, before our heart had ventured from the *little world of home* into the *great world without*, we owed the happiness of many years, of which we have forgotten every thing but that they were delightful. It is not merely *pleasing* to love these first friends; we feel that it is a *duty* to love them; —that is to say, we feel that, unless in circumstances of extraordinary profligacy on their part, if we were not to love them, we should look upon ourselves with *moral disapprobation*. The feeling of this very *duty* mingles in our estimates of the conduct of those whom we love; and it is in this *way* that association in such cases operates;—not by rendering *vice in itself less an object of disapprobation* than before, but by blending with our *disapprobation of the action* that *love of the agent*, which is, as it were, an *opposite duty*. It is the *good* which is mixed with the *bad* that we love, not the *bad* which is mixed with the *good;* and the primary and paramount *love* of the *good*, and *hatred* of the *bad* remain, though we may seem, in certain cases, to *love* the one less or more, or to *hate* the other less or more, in consequence of the vivid images which association affords to heighten or reduce the force of the opposite sentiment,—when the actions of which we approve or disapprove have a resemblance to the actions of those who have loved or made us happy,—

whose love, therefore, and the consequent happiness produced by them, arise, perhaps, to our mind at the very moment at which the similar action is contemplated by us.

These three limitations, then, we must make;—limitations, the necessity of which it would have been natural for us to anticipate, though no objections had been urged to the original differences of actions as objects of moral sentiment. But, making these limitations,—to some one or other of which the apparent anomalies may, I conceive, be referred,—do we not leave still *unimpaired* the great fundamental *distinctions of morality itself*,—the *moral approbation* of the producer of unmixed good as good, the *moral disapprobation* of him who produces unmixed evil for the sake of evil? Where moral *good* and *evil* mix, the emotions may, indeed, be different; but they are different, not because the production of *evil* is *loved* as the mere production of evil, and the production of *good hated* as the mere production of good;—it is only because the evil is tolerated for the good which is loved, and the good, perhaps, in other cases, forgotten or unremarked, in the abhorrence of the evil which accompanies it. When some country is found, in which the intentional producer of pure unmixed misery is preferred, on that very account, to the intentional producer of as much good as an individual is capable of producing,—some country, in which it is reckoned *more meritorious* to *hate* than to *love* a benefactor, *merely for being a benefactor*, and to *love* rather than to

hate the *betrayer of his friend*, merely for being the *betrayer of his friend*,—then may the distinctions of morality be said to be as mutable, perhaps, as any other of the caprices of the most capricious fancy. But the denier of moral distinctions knows well, that it is impossible for him to prove the original indifference of actions in this way. He knows, that the intentional producer of evil, as *pure evil*, is always hated, the intentional producer of good, as *pure good*, always loved; and he flatters himself, that he has succeeded in proving, by an easier way, that we are naturally indifferent to what the prejudiced term *moral good and evil*, merely by proving, that we love the good so *very much*, as to forget, in the contemplation of it, some accompanying evil; and hate the *evil* so *very much*, as to forget, in the contemplation of it, some accompanying good.

One of our most popular moralists begins his inquiry into the truth of the natural distinctions of morality, by quoting from Valerius Maximus, an anecdote of most atrocious profligacy,—which, he supposes, related to a savage, who had been "cut off in his infancy from all intercourse with his species, and consequently, under no possible influence of *example, authority, education, sympathy*, or *habit*; and whose feelings, therefore, in hearing such a relation, if it were possible for us to ascertain what the feelings of such a mind would be, he would consider as decisive of the question." I quote the story as he has translated it.

"The father of Caius Toranius had been proscribed by the Triumvirate. Caius Toranius, coming

over to the interests of that party, discovered to the officers who were in pursuit of his father's life, the *place* where he had concealed himself, and gave them a description by which they might distinguish his person. The old man, more anxious for the safety and fortunes of his son, than about the little that might remain of his own life, began immediately to inquire of the officers who seized him, whether his son was well,—whether he had done his duty to the satisfaction of his generals. 'That son,' replied one of the officers, 'that son, so dear to thy affections, betrayed thee to us. By *his information* thou art apprehended and diest.' The officer, with this, struck a poniard to the old man's heart; and the unhappy parent fell, not so much affected by his fate, as by the means to which he owed it."—*Auctore cædis* quam *ipsa cædi* miserior.*

It is necessary, for the very supposition which is made, that the savage should understand, not merely what is meant by the simple *relations of son and father*, and all the *consequences* of the treachery of the son, but that he should know also the additional interest which the paternal and filial relation, in the whole intercourse of good offices from infancy to manhood, receives from this continued intercourse. The author of our *mere being* is not *all* which a father, in such circumstances, is,—he is far better *known* and *loved* by us as the author of our happiness in childhood and youth, and the venerable friend of our maturer years. If the savage, knowing this relation

* Paley's Moral Philosophy.

in its fullest extent, could yet feel no different emotions of moral regard and dislike, for the son and for the father, it would be *easier* to suppose, that a life of *total privation* of society had dulled his natural susceptibilities of emotion, than that he was originally void of these. But what *reason* is there to *imagine*, that, with this knowledge, he would not have the emotions which are felt by every human being to whom this story is related? It is easy to assert, that knowing every relation of a son and father, as well as the consequence of the action, the savage would not feel what every other human being feels, because it is easy to assume, by begging the question, any point of controversy. But where is the proof of the assertion? We cannot verify the supposition by exact experiment, indeed,—for such a savage, so thoroughly exempted from every social prejudice, is not to be found, and could not be made to understand the story even if he were found. But, though we cannot have the *perfect experiment*, we may yet have an approximation to it. Every infant that is born may be considered very nearly as such a savage; and as soon as the child is capable of knowing the very meaning of the words, without feeling half the force of the filial relation, he shudders at such a tale, with as lively abhorrence, perhaps, as in other years, when his prejudices and habits, and every thing which is not originally in his *constitution*, may be said to be *matured*.

We can imagine vessels sent on voyages of benevolence, to diffuse over the world the blessings of a

pure religion,—we can imagine voyages of this kind to diffuse the improvements of our sciences and arts. But what should we think of a voyage, of which the *sole object* was to teach the world that *all* actions are *not*, in the moral sense of the term, *absolutely indifferent*, and that those who intentionally *do good to the society to which they belong*, or to any *individual of that society*, ought to be objects of *greater regard* than he whose life has been occupied in plans to *injure* the *society in general*, or at least, as *many* individuals of it as his power could reach? What shore is there at which such a vessel could arrive,—however barren the soil, and savage the inhabitants,—where these simple doctrines, which it came to diffuse, could be regarded as giving any instruction? The half-naked animal, that has no hut in which to shelter himself,—no provision beyond the precarious chase of the day,—whose language of numeration does not extend beyond three or four, and who knows God only as *something which produces thunder and the whirlwind*,—even this miserable creature, at least as ignorant as he is helpless, would turn away from his civilized instructors with contempt, as if he had not heard any thing of which he was not equally aware before. The vessel which carried out these simple primary essential truths of morals might return as it went. It could not make a single convert, because there would not have been one who had any doubts to be removed. If, indeed, instead of teaching *these* truths, the voyagers had endeavoured to teach the natives whom they visited the opposite doctrine, as

to the absolute moral indifference of actions, there could then be little doubt that they *might* have taught *something new*, whatever doubt there might justly be as to the *number of the converts*.

When Labienus, after urging to Cato a variety of motives, to induce him to consult the oracle of Ammon, in the neighbourhood of whose temple the little army had arrived, concludes with urging a motive, which he supposed to have peculiar influence on the mind of that great man,—that he should at least make use of the opportunity of inquiring of a being who could not err, what it is which constitutes that moral perfection, which a good man should have in view for the guidance of his life,

"Saltem virtutis amator
Quære *quid est virtus* et posce *exemplar honesti*,"—

How sublimely does the answer to this solicitation express the omnipotent divinity of virtue!

"Ille Deo plenus, tacita quem mente gerebat,
Effudit *dignas adytis*, e pectore voces.
'*Quid* quæri, Labiene, jubes? An liber in armis
Occubuisse velim potius, quam regna videre?
An noceat vis ulla bono? Fortunaque perdat
Opposita virtute minas? Laudendaque *velle*
Sit *satis*,—et nunquam successû crescat honestum?
Scimus,—et hoc nobis non altius inseret Ammon,
Hæremus cuncti Superis, temploque tacente,
Nil facimus non sponte Dei; nec vocibus ullis
Numen eget; dixitque semel nascentibus auctor
Quicquid scire licet; sterilis nec legit arenas,
Ut caneret paucis, mersitque hoc pulvere verum." *

* Lucan. Pharsalia, Lib. ix. v. 562—567, and 569—577.

"Cast your eyes," says Rousseau, "over all the nations of the world, and all the histories of nations. Amid so many inhuman and absurd superstitions—amid that prodigious diversity of manners and characters, you will find every where the same principles and distinctions of moral good and evil. The Paganism of the ancient world produced, indeed, abominable gods, who on earth would have been shunned or punished as monsters, and who offered, as a picture of supreme happiness, only crimes to commit, and passions to satiate. But Vice, armed with this sacred authority, descended in vain from the eternal abode: She found, in the heart of man, a moral instinct to repel her. The continence of Xenocrates was admired by those who celebrated the debaucheries of Jupiter—the chaste Lucretia adored the unchaste Venus—*the most intrepid Roman* sacrificed to *Fear*. He invoked the God who dethroned his father, and he died without a murmur by the hand of his own. The most contemptible divinities were served by the greatest men. The holy voice of Nature, stronger than that of the Gods, made itself heard, and respected, and obeyed on earth, and seemed to *banish*, as it were, to the confinement of Heaven, guilt and the guilty."

There is, indeed, to borrow Cicero's noble description, one true and original law, conformable to reason and to nature, diffused over all, invariable, eternal, which calls to the fulfilment of duty and to abstinence from injustice, and which calls with that irresistible voice, which is felt in all its authority

wherever it is heard. This law cannot be abolished or curtailed, nor affected in its sanctions by any law of man. A whole senate, a whole people, cannot dispense from its paramount obligation. It requires no *commentator* to render it distinctly *intelligible*, nor is it different at *Rome*, at *Athens*, *now*, and in the ages before and after, but in all ages and in all nations, it *is* and *has been*, and will be one and everlasting,—one as that God, its great author and promulgator, who is the common Sovereign of all mankind, is *himself one*. Man is truly man, as he yields to this Divine influence. He cannot resist it, but by flying as it were from his own bosom, and laying aside the general feelings of humanity—by which very act, he must already have inflicted on himself the *severest of punishments*, even though he were to avoid whatever is usually accounted punishment. "Est quidem vera lex, recta ratio, naturæ congruens,—diffusa in omnes, constans, sempiterna; quæ vocet ad officium jubendo, vetando a fraude deterreat; quæ tamen neque probos frustra jubet aut vetat, nec improbos jubendo aut vetando movet. Huic legi, nec *obrogari* fas est, neque *derogari* ex hâc aliquid licet, neque tota *abrogari* potest. Nec vero, aut per senatum aut per populum, solvi hac lege possumus. Neque est quærendus explanator aut interpres ejus alius. Nec erit alia lex Romæ, alia Athenis,—alia nunc, alia posthac; sed et omnes gentes, et omni tempore, una lex et sempiterna, et immortalis *continebit*; unusque erit communis quasi magister, et Imperator omnium, *Deus*,—Ille legis

hujus inventor, disceptator, lator; cui qui non parebit, ipse se fugiet, ac naturam hominis aspernabitur; atque hoc ipso luet maximas pœnas, etiam si cætera supplicia quæ putantur effugerit."

I have already, in a former Lecture, alluded to the strength of the evidence, which is borne by the guilty, to the truth of those distinctions which they have dared to disregard. If there be any one who has an *interest* in gathering every argument which even sophistry can suggest, to prove that virtue is nothing, and *vice therefore nothing*, and who will strive to yield himself readily to this consolatory persuasion, it is surely the criminal who trembles beneath a weight of memory which he cannot shake off. Yet even he who feels the power of virtue only in the torture which it inflicts, *does* still feel this power, and feels it with at least as strong *conviction of its* reality, as those to whom it is every moment diffusing pleasure, and who might be considered perhaps as not very rigid questioners of an illusion which they felt to be delightful. The spectral forms of superstition have, indeed, vanished; but there is *one spectre* which will continue to haunt the mind, as long as the mind itself is capable of guilt, and has exerted this dreadful capacity,—*the spectre of a guilty life*, which does not haunt only the darkness of a few hours of night, but comes in fearful visitations, whenever the mind has no other object before it that can engage every thought, in the most splendid scenes, and in the brightest hours of day. What enchanter is there who can come to the relief of a sufferer of

this class, and put the terrifying spectre to flight? We may say to the murderer, that, in poisoning his friend, to succeed a little sooner to the estate, which he knew that his friendship had bequeathed to him, he had done a deed as meritorious in itself, as if he had saved the life of his friend at the risk of his own; and that all for which there was any reason to upbraid himself was, that he had suffered his benefactor to remain so many years in the possession of means of enjoyment, which a few grains of opium or arsenic might have transferred sooner to *him*. We may strive to make him *laugh* at the *absurdity* of the scene, when on the very bed of death, that hand which had often pressed his with kindness before, seemed to press again with delight the very hand which had mixed and presented the potion. But, though we may smile—if we *can* smile—at such a scene as this, and point out the incongruity with as much ingenious pleasantry as if we were describing some ludicrous mistake, there will be no laughter on that *face* from which we strive to force a smile. He who felt the grasp of that hand will *feel it still*, and will shudder at our description; and shudder still more at the tone of jocular merriment with which we describe what is to him so dreadful.

What, then, is that theory of the moral indifference of actions, which is evidently so powerless,—of which even *he*, who professes to regard it as sound philosophy, feels the importance as much as other men,—when he *loves* the *virtuous*, and *hates* the *guilty*,—when he looks back with *pleasure* on some

generous action, or with shame and horror on actions of a different kind, which his own sound philosophy would teach him to be, in every thing that relates to his own internal feelings, exclusively of the errors and prejudices of education, equal and indifferent? It is vain to say, as if to weaken the force of this argument, that the same self-approving complacency, and the same remorse, are felt for actions, which are absolutely insignificant in themselves,—for regular observance or neglect of the most frivolous rites of superstition. There can be no question, that self-complacency and remorse *are* felt in such cases. But it surely requires little philosophy to perceive, that, though a mere ceremony of devotion may be truly insignificant in itself, it is far from insignificant, when considered as the *command* of *Him*, to whose goodness we owe every thing which we value as *great*,—and to disobey whose command, therefore, whatever the command may be, never can be a slight offence. To consider the ceremonial rite alone, without regard to *Him* who is believed to have *enjoined it*, is an error as gross, as it would be to read the statutes of some great people, and paying no attention to the legislative power which enacted them, we laugh, perhaps, at the folly of those who thought it necessary to conform their conduct to a law, which was nothing but a series of alphabetic characters on a scrap of *paper* or *parchment*, that in a single moment could be torn to pieces or burnt.

Why do we smile on reading, in the list of the works of the hero of a celebrated philosophic ro-

mance, that one of these was " a complete digest of the law of nature, with a review of those 'laws' that are obsolete or repealed, and of those that are ready to be renewed, and put in force?" We feel that the laws of nature are *laws* which no lapse of ages can render *obsolete*, because they are every moment operating in every heart; and which, for the same reason, never can be *repealed*, till man shall have ceased to be man.

After these remarks on the *general* theory of the original moral indifference of actions, which considers all morality as adventitious, without any original tendencies in the mind, that could of themselves lead it to approve or disapprove, it may be necessary still to take some notice of that *peculiar modification of the theory*, which denies all *original* obligation of justice, but asserts the authority of political enactment,—not as attaching merely rewards to certain actions, and *punishments* to certain *other actions*, but as *producing* the very notions of just and unjust, with all the kindred *notions* involved in them, and consequently a *right*, which it would be *immorality*, as well as *imprudence*, to attempt to violate.

Of this doctrine, which is to be traced in some writers of antiquity, but which is better known as the doctrine of Hobbes, who stated it with all the force which his acuteness could give it,—a doctrine to which he was led in some measure perhaps by a horror of the civil dissensions of the period in which

he wrote, and by a wish to lessen the inquisitorial and domineering influence of the priesthood of that fanatical age, by rendering even religion itself subject to the decision of the civil power;—the *confutation* is surely *sufficiently obvious*. A law, if there be no moral obligation, *independent* of the law, and *prior* to it, is only the expression of the desire of a multitude, who have power to *punish*, that is to say, to inflict evil of some kind on those who resist them,—it may be imprudent, therefore, to resist them; that is to say, imprudent to run the risk of that precise quantity of physical suffering which is threatened; but it can be nothing more. If there be no *essential morality* that is independent of law, an action does not acquire any *new qualities* by being the desire of *one thousand* persons rather than of *one*. There may be more danger, indeed, in disobeying one thousand than in disobeying one, but not more guilt. To use Dr Cudworth's argument, it must either be *right* to obey the law, and wrong to disobey it, or indifferent whether we obey it or not. If it be morally indifferent whether we obey it or not, the law, which may or may not be obeyed, with equal virtue, cannot be a source of virtue; and if it be right to obey it, the very supposition that it is right to *obey it*, implies a notion of right and wrong that is *antecedent to the law*, and gives it its moral efficacy. But, without reasoning so abstractly, are there, indeed, no differences of *feeling* in the breast of *him* who has violated a law, the *essential equity* of which he feels, and of him whom the accumulated and ever-increasing wrongs of a whole nation have

driven to resist a force, which, however long it may have been established, he feels to be usurpation and iniquity;—who, with the hope of giving freedom to millions, has lifted against a tyrant, though armed with all the *legal terrors*, and therefore with all the *morality and virtue* of *despotism*, that sword, around which other swords are soon to gather in hands as firm, and which, in the arm of him who lifts it, is almost like the standard of liberty herself? Why does the slave, who is led to the field, in which he is to combat for his chains against those who would release him and avenge his wrongs, feel himself *disgraced* by *obedience*, when to *obey* implicitly whatever the power may be which he obeys, is the *very perfection of heroic virtue?* and when he looks on the glorious rebel, as he comes forward with his fearless band, why is it that he looks not with *indignation*, but with an *awful respect*; and that he feels his arm *weaker* in the fight, by the comparison of what *he* morally is, and of what those are whom he servilely opposes?

"A sovereign," it has been truly said, "may enact and rescind laws; but he cannot *create* or *annihilate* a single virtue." It might be amusing to consider, not one sovereign only, but all the sovereigns of the different nations of the earth, endeavouring *by law* to change a virtue into a vice,—a vice into a virtue. If an imperial enactment of a senate of kings were to declare, that it was in future to be a crime for a mother to love her child,—for a child to venerate his parent,—if high privileges were to be

attached to the most ungrateful, and an act of *gratitude* to a *benefactor* declared to be a *capital offence*,—would the heart of man obey this impotent legislation? Would remorse and self-approbation *vary* with the command of *man*, or of any *number of men*? and would he, who, notwithstanding these laws, had obstinately persisted in the illegality of loving his parent, or his benefactor, tremble to meet his own conscience with the horror which the parricide feels? There is, indeed, a power by which "princes decree justice;" but it is a power above the mere voice of kings,—a power, which has previously fixed in the breasts of those who receive the decree, a love of the very virtue which kings, even when kings are most virtuous, can only *enforce*. And it is well for man, that the feeble authorities of this earth cannot change the sentiments of our hearts with the same facility, as they can throw fetters on our hands. There would then, indeed, be no hope to the oppressed. The greater the oppression, the stronger motive would there be to make obedience to oppression a virtue, and every species of guilt, which the powerful might love to exercise, *amiable* in the eyes even of the miserable victims. All virtue, in such circumstances, would soon perish from the earth. A single tyrant would be sufficient to destroy what all the tyrants, that have ever disgraced this moral scene, have been incapable of extinguishing,—the remorse which was felt in the bosom of him who could order every thing but vice and virtue,—and the scorn, and the sorrow, and the

wrath of every noble heart, in the very contemplation of his guilty power.

Nature has not thrown us upon the world with such feeble principles as these. She has given us virtues of which no power can deprive us, and has fixed in the soul of Him whom more than fifty nations obey, a restraint on his power, from which the servile obedience of all the nations of the globe could not absolve him. There may be flatterers to surround a tyrant's throne, with knees ever ready to bow on the very blood with which its steps are stained, and with voices ever ready to applaud the guilt that has been already perpetrated, and to praise, even with a sort of prophetic quickness of discernment, the cruelties in prospect which they only *anticipate.* There may be servile warriors, to whom it is indifferent whether they *succour* or *oppress,* whether they *enslave* or *free,* if they have only drowned in blood, with sufficient promptness, the thousands of human beings whom they have been commanded to sweep from the earth. There may be statesmen as servile, to whom the people are nothing, and to whom *every thing* is dear, *but* liberty and virtue. These eager emulators of each other's baseness, may sound for ever in the *ears* of him on whose vices their own power depends, that what he has willed *must* be right, because he has willed it—and priests still more base from the very dignity of that station which they dishonour, not content with proclaiming that crimes are right, may add their consecrating voice and proclaim that they are holy, because they

are the deeds of a vicegerent of that Holiness, which is supreme. But the flatteries, which only sound in the ear, or play, perhaps, with feeble comfort around the surface of the heart, are unable to reach that deeper-seated sense of guilt, which is within.

In subjecting, for the evident good of all, whole multitudes to the sway of a *few*, or of *one*, Nature then, as we have seen, has thrown over them a shelter, which power may indeed violate, but which it cannot violate with impunity; since even when it is free from every other punishment, it is found, however reluctantly, to become the punisher of itself. This shelter, under which alone human weakness is safe, and which does not give protection only but happiness, is the shelter of virtue,—the shelter of moral love and hate, of moral pity and indignation, of moral joy and remorse. Life, indeed, and many of the enjoyments which render social life delightful, may, at least on a great part of the surface of the earth, be at the mercy of a power that may seem to attack or forbear with no restraint but the caprice of its own will. Yet, *before* even these can be assailed, there is a voice which warns to *desist*, and a still more awful voice of *condemnation*, when the warning has been disregarded. For our *best* enjoyments, —our remembrances of virtue, and our wishes of virtue—we are not dependent on the mercy, nor even on the restraints of power. Nature has provided for them with all her care, by placing them where no force can reach. In freedom or under tyranny they alike are safe from aggression;—because, wherever the arm can find its way, there is still *conscience beyond*.

The blow, which reaches the heart itself, cannot tear from the heart what, in life, has been happiness or consolation, and what, in death, is a happiness that needs not to be comforted.

Our own felicity is then truly, in no slight degree, as Goldsmith says, *consigned to ourselves*, amidst all the varieties of social institutions.

> " In every government, though terrors reign,
> Though tyrant kings, or tyrant laws restrain,
> How small, of all that human hearts endure,
> That part which laws or kings can cause or cure!
> Still to ourselves, in every place, consign'd,
> Our own felicity we make or find.
> With secret course, which no loud storms annoy,
> Glides the smooth current of domestic joy.
> The lifted axe, the agonizing wheel,
> Luke's iron crown, and Damien's bed of steel,
> To men remote from power but rarely known,
> Leave reason, faith, and *conscience* all our own."*

" So far," says Cicero, " is virtue from depending on the enactment of kings, that it is as ancient as the system of nature itself, or as the great Being by whom nature was formed."—" Vis ad recte facta vocandi et a peccatis avocandi, non modo senior est, quam ætas populorum et civitatum, sed æqualis illius cœlum atque terras tuentis et regentis Dei—Nec si, regnante Tarquinio, nulla erat Romæ scripta lex de stupris, idcirco non contra illam legem sempiternam, Sextus Tarquinius vim Lucretiæ attulit.

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* Concluding verses of the Traveller.

Erat enim ratio profecta a rerum natura, et ad rectè faciendum impellens et a delicto avocans, que non tum denique incipit lex esse cum scripta est sed tum cum orta est; orta autem simul est cum mente divina." * The law, on which right and wrong depend, did not begin to be law when it was written: it is older than the ages of nations and cities, and contemporary with the very eternity of God.

* De legibus, lib. II. c. 4, of Gruter's Notation—or c. 8, 9, 10, of the common Notation—with some alterations and omissions.

END OF VOLUME THIRD.

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